CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED TRAIN

Project Environmental Impact Report / Environmental Impact Statement

DRAFT

Scoping Report

Merced to Sacramento Section High-Speed Train Project EIR/EIS

March 2010

California High-Speed Rail Authority

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U.S. Department of Transportation
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CALIFORNIA HIGH-SPEED TRAIN PROJECT EIR/EIS

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Merced to Sacramento Section
Scoping Report

Prepared by:

AECOM
CH2M HILL

March 2010

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ATG	automobile trips generated
BNSF	Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad Company
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CCT	Central California Traction
CEQ	Council on Environmental Quality
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CVRTF	Central Valley Rails to Trails Foundation
EIR/EIS	Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
FRA	Federal Railroad Administration
GHG	greenhouse gas
GIS	geographic information system
HRA	health risk assessment
HST	High-Speed Train
km	kilometer
kph	kilometer(s) per hour
LOS	level of service
MA	Master Agreement
mph	miles per hour
NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NOI	Notice of Intent
NOP	Notice of Preparation
NO_x	oxides of nitrogen
RTP	Regional Transportation Plan

SACOG	Sacramento Area Council of Governments
SHS	state highway system
SJCOG	San Joaquin Council of Governments
SJRRC	San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission
SJVAPCD	San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District
SMAQMD	Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District
SMUD	Sacramento Municipal Utility District
STIP	State Transportation Improvement Plan
TAC	toxic air contaminant
TCP	traffic control plan
TDM	transportation demand management
TIS	traffic impact study
TMP	transportation management plan
TOD	transit-oriented development
UAIC	United Auburn Indian Community
UPRR	Union Pacific Railroad Company

Summary

This report summarizes the scoping process and comments received for the Merced to Sacramento Section of the California High-Speed Train (HST) project. The report provides a brief project background, a description of the scoping process and meetings, a list of other outreach activities, and a summary of the public and agency comments received during scoping.

In 2005, the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) completed a Statewide Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) as the first-phase of a tiered environmental review process for the proposed California High-Speed Train (HST) system. In 2008, the Authority published the Bay Area to Central Valley HST Final Program EIR/EIS. As part of the HST Alternative selected for further analysis, the Authority and FRA selected certain corridors/general alignments and general station locations for further study (see Figure 1-1). The Merced to Sacramento HST Project EIR/EIS will describe and present an environmental evaluation of site-specific alignment alternatives and station locations within this corridor.

The Authority encourages broad participation during EIR/EIS scoping and review of the draft environmental documents. Comments and suggestions are invited from all interested agencies and the public to ensure that the full range of issues related to the proposed action are addressed, including all reasonable alternatives. In particular, the Authority is interested in determining where there are areas of environmental sensitivity and where there could be a potential for significant impacts from the HST project.

The Authority and FRA initiated the environmental process with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) which was published in the *Federal Register* on December 30, 2009. On December 23, 2009, a California State Notice of Preparation (NOP) was distributed to the State Clearinghouse; elected officials; local, regional, and State agencies; and the interested public. The San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (SJRRC) is a local partner who has joined the Authority in supporting the project development process. The SJRRC is interested in providing intercity and commuter regional rail passenger services within this section of the HST System that would connect to the Altamont Corridor Rail Project.

In response to the NOP/NOI, public agencies with legal jurisdiction were requested to advise the Authority and the FRA of the applicable permit and environmental review requirements of each agency, and the scope and content of the environmental information that is germane to the agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Public scoping meetings were scheduled as an important component of the scoping process for both the State and federal environmental review.

During the scoping period, four public scoping meetings were held in the Merced to Sacramento project corridor between January 20, 2010, and January 28, 2010. Over 340 people attended these meetings. The Authority and FRA received a total of 147 comments from individuals and organizations and comments from 23 agencies on the proposed project. Major issues identified as a result of scoping are listed below:

- The location of stations
- The location of the HST alignment
- The location of a heavy maintenance facility
- Connections to local and regional transit
- Fast-tracking of the project
- The benefits of HST, including air quality, congestion relief, and economic development
- Agricultural impacts
- Noise and vibration impacts
- Natural resource impacts
- Impacts on wildlife and habitat
- Public utility impacts
- Historic property impacts
- Restrictive permit requirements
- Cost and financing of the system
- Use of project labor agreements and U.S. labor and products for HST construction
- Power source and requirements
- Impacts on local business
- Employment opportunities
- Ridership estimates

- Property acquisition
- Displacement of people
- Park impacts
- Wind impacts
- Hazardous materials impacts
- Safety and security

1.0 Introduction

The following report summarizes the scoping process for the Merced to Sacramento Section of the California High-Speed Train (HST) project. This report includes a project description, explains the purpose of scoping, describes the scoping notification process, summarizes the four project scoping meetings, summarizes the comments received from the public and agencies, and describes the next steps for the project.

1.1 Description of Project

Since 1992, extensive information has been gathered and a preliminary evaluation has been completed concerning the potential environmental effects associated with numerous HST corridor alternatives throughout California. From feasibility studies through conceptual design, a variety of technical studies have been undertaken to address the engineering, operational, financial, ridership, and environmental aspects of such a system. The findings of these studies resulted in a Business Plan prepared by the California High-Speed Rail Authority (Authority) in November 2008 and updated in December 2009. The Authority was established in 1996 and is authorized and directed by statute to undertake the planning and development of a proposed statewide HST network that is fully coordinated with other public transportation services. This study concluded that California would benefit substantially from HST transportation and the Authority initiated further evaluation of a HST system connecting the San Francisco Bay Area, Sacramento, Los Angeles, and San Diego. The proposed statewide HST system (Figure 1-1) consists of approximately 800 miles (1,287 kilometers [km]) of electric propulsion and steel-wheel-on-steel-rail trains capable of operating speeds of 220 miles per hour (mph) (354 km per hour [kph]) on a mostly dedicated system of fully grade-separated, access-controlled steel track with state-of-the-art safety, signaling, communication, and automated train control systems.

In 2001, the Authority and the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) started a tiered environmental review process for the HST System and in 2005, completed the first tier California HST Program Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Statewide Program EIR/EIS). The Authority certified the Final Program EIR under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and approved the proposed HST System, and FRA issued a record of decision under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) on the Statewide Program EIR/EIS. The Statewide Program EIR/EIS established the purpose and need for the HST system, analyzed a HST system, and compared it with a No Project/No Action Alternative and a Modal Alternative. In approving the HST System, the Authority and FRA also selected corridors/general alignments and station location options throughout most of the system. The Statewide Program EIR/EIS selected the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) corridor for the HST route from Sacramento south to Stockton and the BNSF railroad corridor from Stockton south to Merced. Consistent with the Clean Water Act implementing regulations and because the UPRR alignment option could have more potential impacts on waters and biological resources, the Central California Traction (CCT) alignment between Sacramento and Stockton will also be evaluated as part of the Project EIR/EIS.

Figure 1-1

Proposed California HST System

In 2008, the Authority and FRA completed a second program EIR/EIS to evaluate and select general alignments and station locations within the broad corridor between and including the Altamont Pass and the Pacheco Pass to connect the Bay Area and Central Valley portions of the HST System. The Authority and FRA selected the Pacheco Pass with the San Francisco and San Jose termini network alternative, as well as preferred corridor alignments and station location options. The UPRR corridor was selected as the preferred alignment through the portion of the Central Valley from south of Stockton to Merced and the BNSF corridor was recommended for further study in this area for the Project EIR/EIS. The Authority is currently undertaking additional work on the Program EIR for the Bay Area to Central Valley portions of the HST system to comply with a final court ruling in the Town of Atherton litigation. The court ruling allowed the Authority to continue its project-level EIR work while making the necessary programmatic EIR corrections. The Authority circulated the revisions to the Program EIR on March 11, 2010 and will then make a new programmatic decision to select a network alternative, alignments, and station locations to be studied further at the project level.

The Merced to Sacramento Section HST Project EIR/EIS will tier from the Final Statewide Program EIR/EIS and the Final Bay Area to Central Valley HST Program EIR/EIS in accordance with Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] §1508.28) and CEQA guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] §15168[b]), building upon all previous work prepared for and incorporated in the Statewide Program EIR/EIS and the Bay Area to Central Valley HST Program EIR/EIS. Tiering is a staged approach to NEPA in which broad programs and issues are evaluated in initial (Tier 1) analyses and site-specific proposals and impacts are evaluated in subsequent tier studies. The

Merced to Sacramento Section HST Project EIR/EIS will describe site-specific environmental impacts, identify specific mitigation measures to address those impacts, and discuss design practices that the Authority proposes to use to avoid and minimize potential adverse environmental impacts. The Authority and the FRA will assess the site characteristics, size, nature, and timing of proposed site-specific HST project sections to determine whether the adverse impacts are potentially significant as defined by NEPA and CEQA, and whether adverse impacts can be avoided or mitigated. This document and other project EIR/EISs will identify and evaluate reasonable and feasible site-specific alignment alternatives, and evaluate the impacts from construction, operation, and maintenance of the HST System, including track, ancillary facilities, and stations along the preferred alternative corridors from Merced to Sacramento. In addition, features necessary to accommodate connections to the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission's (SJRRC's) Altamont Corridor Rail Project, which consists of the potential operation of a regional passenger rail service in this section of the Authority's HST System infrastructure between Modesto and Stockton, and the potential development of additional regional stations for such a service will be identified and evaluated.

1.2 Project Alternatives

The Merced to Sacramento Section HST Project EIR/EIS will consider a No Action or No Project Alternative and an HST Alternative for the Merced to Sacramento corridor. These alternatives are briefly described below.

1.2.1 No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative (No Project or No Build) represents the conditions in the corridor as it existed in 2009, and as it would exist based on programmed and funded improvements to the intercity transportation system and other reasonably foreseeable projects through 2035, taking into account the following sources of information: the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), Regional Transportation Plans (RTPs) for all modes of travel, airport plans, intercity passenger rail plans, and city and county plans.

1.2.2 HST Alternative

The Authority proposes to construct, operate, and maintain an electric-powered steel-wheel-on-steel-rail HST system, about 800 miles (1,287 km) long, capable of operating at speeds of 220 mph (354 kph) on dedicated, mostly grade-separated tracks, with state-of-the-art safety, signaling, and automated train control systems. The Merced to Sacramento HST Project consists of a 120-mile (193-km) corridor of the 800-mile (1,287-km) system from the City of Merced to the City of Sacramento. The project will include stations in Modesto, Stockton, and Sacramento. The station in Merced will be analyzed in the EIR/EIS for the Merced to Fresno Section of the HST System. Figure 1-2 is a map of the Merced to Sacramento Section of the HST system. In addition, alternative sites for right-of-way maintenance, train storage facilities, and a fleet storage/service and inspection/light maintenance facility in Sacramento will be evaluated. Further engineering studies to be undertaken as part of this EIR/EIS process will examine and refine alignments in the BNSF, CCT, and UPRR corridors. The entire alignment would be grade-separated. In addition, alternative sites for right-of-way maintenance and train storage facilities will be evaluated in the Merced to Fresno HST corridor. Finally, features necessary to accommodate connections to the Altamont Corridor Rail Project between Stockton and Modesto will be identified and evaluated.

As part of the Bay Area to Central Valley HST Program EIR/EIS, the Authority and FRA selected the UPRR corridor as the preferred alignment through the portion of the Central Valley from south of Stockton to Merced and the BNSF railroad corridor was recommended for further study in this area for the Project EIR/EIS. The UPRR corridor for the HST train route from Sacramento south to Stockton and the BNSF railroad corridor from Stockton south to Merced was selected in the Statewide Program EIR/EIS. Consistent with the Clean Water Act implementing regulations and because the UPRR alignment option

may have more potential impacts on waters and biological resources, the CCT alignment between Sacramento and Stockton will also be evaluated as part of the Project EIR/EIS.

1.3 Purpose of Scoping

Public scoping is an important element in the process of determining the focus and content of an EIR/EIS. Scoping helps to identify the range of actions, alternatives, environmental effects, and mitigation measures to be analyzed in depth, and helps eliminate from detailed study those issues that are not pertinent to the final decision on the proposed project. Scoping is also an effective way to bring together and address the concerns of the public, affected agencies, and other interested parties. Significant issues may be identified through public and agency comments. CEQ Regulations Section 1501.7 and CEQA Section 21083.9 describe scoping as required by NEPA and CEQA.

Scoping is not conducted to resolve differences concerning the merits of a project or to anticipate the ultimate decision on a proposal. Rather scoping helps ensure that a comprehensive and focused EIR/EIS will be prepared that informs the decision making process.

The intent of the scoping process for the Merced to Sacramento Section is to:

- Inform public agencies and interested members of the public about the proposed project, including compliance with NEPA and CEQA requirements, and the Authority's and FRA's actions in relation to it.
- Assist with identifying a range of alignments and station locations along the Merced to Sacramento Section that may be considered in the EIR/EIS.
- Assist with identifying the range of concerns and project-related issues to be considered in the EIR/EIS.
- Assist with indentifying mitigation measures, strategies, and approaches to mitigation that may be useful and explored further in the EIR/EIS.
- Develop an expanded mailing list of agencies and individuals interested in the future actions relative to the EIR/EIS.

The scoping process and the input gathered during the scoping period are documented herein for the Merced to Sacramento Section Project EIR/EIS.

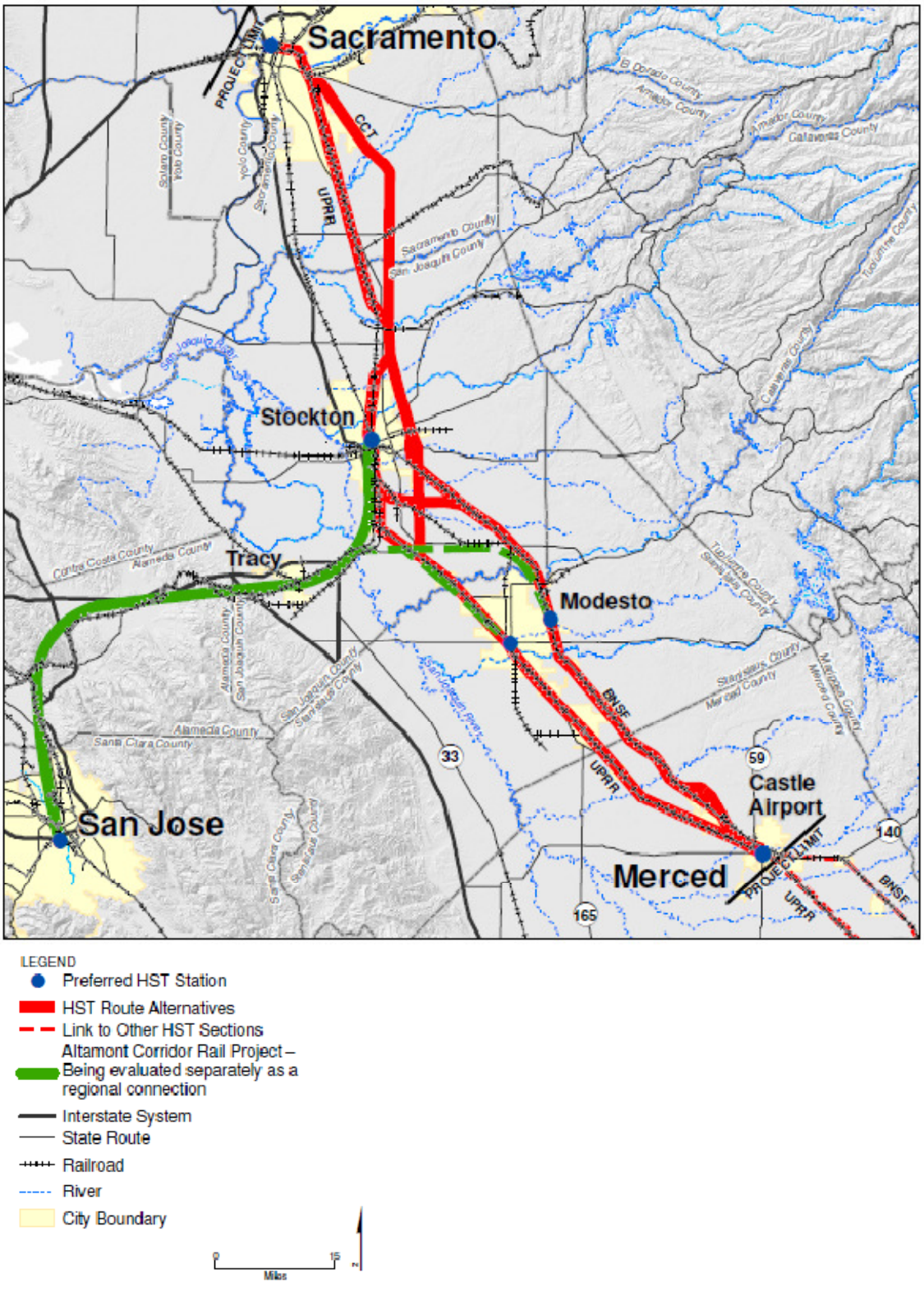


Figure 1-2

Merced to Sacramento Section HST Project Area

1.4 Notification of EIR/EIS Scoping

The official start of the EIR/EIS process was the issuance of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Merced to Sacramento Section HST Project EIR/EIS (Appendix A) that was distributed to the State Clearinghouse; local, regional, and state agencies; and interested public. The federal process began with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) (Appendix B) in the *Federal Register*. The NOP was distributed on December 23, 2009, and the NOI was published in the *Federal Register* on December 30, 2009.

The NOP and NOI discussed the purpose of the study, the project limits, the need for agency input, potential environmental impacts of the project, contact names for additional information regarding the project, and a description of alternatives to be considered. In addition, an invitation letter was sent directly to representatives at the federal, state, and local agencies; elected officials; and tribes on the project mailing list inviting them to do the following:

- Provide written comments on scoping through the NOP and NOI, including advising the Authority and the FRA of the applicable permit and environmental review requirements of the agency and the scope and content of the environmental information germane to the agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project.
- Attend the scoping meetings.
- Distribute scoping meeting information or post information about the upcoming scoping meetings and post information provided on agency website or newsletter.

Public notification for the scoping meetings was made through a scoping meeting announcement (Appendix C) distributed to those on a mailing list and email list derived from past work and current project outreach and to property owners. The list of property owners was compiled by gathering property owner addresses within 500 feet (150 meters) of stations and 100 feet (30 meters) on either side of each alignment. If the property within this distance belonged to a railroad company or the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), additional addresses were gathered in increments of 100 feet (30 meters) until a property owner other than a railroad company or Caltrans was found. For the area adjacent to the curve on the CCT, property owners within 500 feet (150 meters) on either side were included. Approximately 1,600 postcards were sent to property owners in the Merced to Sacramento corridor. An additional 1,570 postcards were sent to stakeholders from the distribution list, including agencies, organizations, and individuals. See Appendix D for the scoping notice distribution lists. Notification was also provided on the Authority's website. Table 1-1 lists the publications and dates for the display advertisements published prior to the scoping meetings.

Table 1-1
Public Notifications Published within the Merced to Sacramento Section

Publication	Display Ad
Atwater Times	January 14
Elk Grove Citizen	January 13
Galt Herald	January 13
Lodi Sentinel	January 13
Manteca Bulletin	January 13
Merced County Times	January 13
Merced Sun-Star	January 13

Publication	Display Ad
Modesto Bee	January 13
Sacramento Bee	January 13
Stockton Record	January 13
Tracy Press	January 13
Turlock Journal	January 13
Note: All dates are 2010.	

1.5 Scoping Process

The scoping activities for the Merced to Sacramento Section were conducted between December 23, 2009, and February 26, 2010 (scoping period). The geographical extent and complexity of the proposed project necessitated that scoping meetings be held in several locations in the project corridor. Four public scoping meetings were held in the Merced to Sacramento HST project corridor between January 20, 2010, and January 28, 2010, as shown in Table 1-2. All meetings were held between 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. to allow representatives from agencies and the public the opportunity to participate. Scoping meetings were held in an open house format, allowing people to arrive at any time to obtain information and provide input. Project team members were available throughout the meetings to respond to questions and record comments. The deadline for submitting scoping comments was February 26, 2010.

Table 1-2
Scoping Meeting Locations within the Merced to Sacramento Section

Date	City	Location/Address
January 20	Stockton	San Joaquin Council of Governments, 555 E. Weber Ave., Stockton
January 21	Merced	Merced Community Senior Center, 755 W. 15th St., Merced
January 27	Sacramento	Amtrak Depot, Model Room, 301 I St., Sacramento
January 28	Modesto	Modesto Centre Plaza, 1000 L Street, Modesto

Materials developed for use in the scoping process included the following, which can be reviewed in Appendices A, B, C, F, and G, respectively:

- Copy of the NOP
- Copy of the NOI
- Scoping meeting announcement mailer and scoping information brochure
- Information boards displayed on easels
- Scoping period comment card and *Draw-your-own-map* handout

Members of the public; affected federal, state, and local agencies; interest groups; and other interested parties participated in the scoping process by attending the meetings and/or providing written and verbal comments or recommendations concerning project alignment and station alternatives, potential environmental impacts to be analyzed in the EIR/EIS, and other project-related issues.

Although scoping is a distinct stage in the EIR/EIS process, public involvement activities will extend throughout preparation of the EIR/EIS. These activities allow for interaction and exchange of information

and discussion of issues and concerns among the public, agencies, and EIR/EIS preparers throughout the study process.

2.0 Public and Agency Involvement during Scoping

Throughout the scoping period, the Authority and the FRA encouraged public input through a variety of activities. As noted, the Authority issued the NOP and the FRA published the NOI in the *Federal Register*, initiating the scoping process.

Agency representatives attended the scoping meetings and numerous letters in response to the NOP/NOI were received. Members of the public and representatives from organizations also attended the meetings, some of whom provided comments at the meetings.

2.1 Summary of Noticed Scoping Meetings

The scoping meetings were open to both the general public and agencies. Attendance lists for the scoping meetings are included in Appendix E. Copies of the materials provided at the scoping meetings are included in Appendix F, Public Scoping Meeting Display Boards; and Appendix G, Public Scoping Comment Card and Handouts.

Scoping comment cards were provided at each of the meetings for attendees to provide comments on the materials and information presented. Written scoping comments and questions collected at the meetings, written on flip charts and large maps at the meetings, on the *Draw-your-own map* or submitted via mail or through the Authority's internet website, and verbal comments recorded at the scoping meetings through a court reporter are included in Appendix H and Appendix I, respectively, and summarized below in Section 3, Scoping Summary of Issues. Agency responses to the NOP and NOI are included in Appendix J and summarized in Section 3.4.

Over 340 people attended the scoping meetings in Stockton, Merced, Sacramento, and Modesto. Approximately 147 comments were submitted by individuals and organizations, and 23 agencies provided comments. The scoping meetings are summarized in the following sections.

2.1.1 Stockton, January 20, 2010

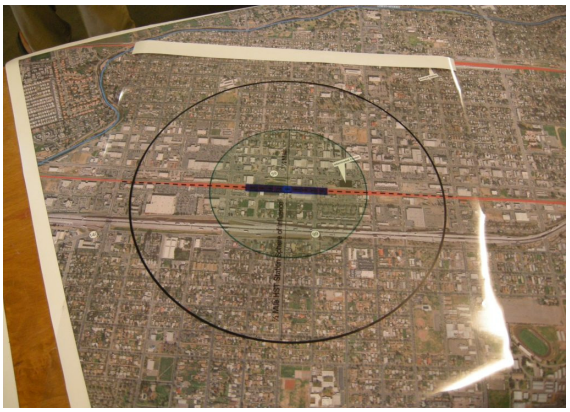
Scoping meeting in Stockton

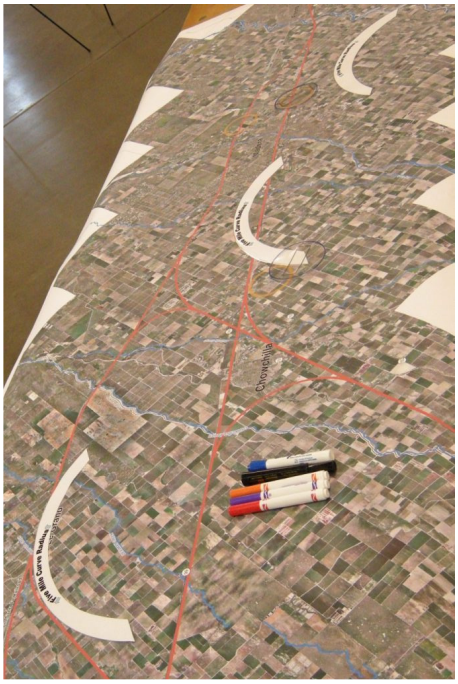
On January 20, 2010, the Authority held a scoping meeting at the San Joaquin Council of Governments from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. A total of 63 people signed in at the meeting, including representatives from the cities of Escalon, Lodi, Manteca, Ripon, Stockton, and Tracy; the San Joaquin Council of Governments; San Joaquin County; SJRRC/Altamont Commuter Express; Caltrans District 10; California Farm Bureau Federation; Agriculture Council of California; San Joaquin County Farm Bureau; San Joaquin County Chamber of Commerce; Lodi Chamber of Commerce; and the Sierra Club. In addition, representatives from the offices of Congressman Cardoza; Congressman McNerny; Senator Wolk; and Assembly Members Galgiani, Huber, and Berryhill attended.

The meeting was in an open house format, with information stations and staff available to answer questions through informal discussions. A welcome table provided an area to sign in, receive meeting handouts, ask questions, and receive general orientation. Attendees arrived at different times throughout the meeting. Poster displays on easels provided information for attendees about the California HST Project, high-speed trains, the Merced to Sacramento HST Section, alternatives analysis, and the environmental process. A 25-minute video presentation providing background information on the California HST Project played in a continuous loop. In addition, due to the proximity

and coordination between projects, Altamont Corridor Rail Project displays and staff members were available to provide information and answer questions.

Several comment options were available at the meeting. Tables provided a place for people to sit down to compose their comments on the comment cards supplied, and a separate area was established for giving comments verbally to a court reporter. Large aerial maps of the project vicinity with lines representing the proposed alignment corridors based on the Statewide Programmatic EIR/EIS and the Bay Area to Central Valley Programmatic EIR/EIS were displayed on tables. Large-scale aerial maps of the station location area were also provided to facilitate discussions about potential station locations. Marking pens were available for attendees to use to write comments on the maps or indicate specific natural or community resources or areas of concern. Movable track curve and station area templates were available for both the large alignment maps and the station area map, respectively, to enable participants to understand how the proposed facilities could be sited in other areas along the project corridor. In addition, 11 x 17-inch (27.9 x 43.2-cm) map handouts depicting the programmatic alignments enabled attendees to draw their alignment and station location ideas. For native Spanish speakers, a staff member fluent in Spanish was present to assist with answering questions and submitting comments if needed.





Large-scale maps of the project vicinity with tools to illustrate the station area and rail alignment facilitated discussion.

2.1.2 Merced, January 21, 2010

On January 21, 2010, the Authority held a scoping meeting at the Merced Community Senior Center from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Eighty-four people signed in at the meeting, including representatives from the City of Merced, Merced County, Merced Irrigation District, Greater Merced Chamber of Commerce, Atwater Chamber of Commerce, Greater Merced High-Speed Rail Committee, University of California-Merced, Farm Bureau, SJRRC/Altamont Corridor Express, and the office of Congressman Cardoza.

The meeting was in an open house format, with information stations and staff available to answer questions through informal discussions. A welcome table provided an area to sign in, receive meeting handouts, ask questions, and receive general orientation. Attendees arrived at different times throughout the meeting. Poster displays on easels provided information for attendees about the California HST Project, high-speed trains, the Merced to Sacramento HST Section, alternatives analysis, and the environmental process. A 25-minute video presentation providing background information on the

California HST Project played in a continuous loop. Because the Merced to Sacramento HST Section connects to the Merced to Fresno HST Section, representatives from the Merced to Fresno HST Section were present with maps to answer questions. In addition, due to the proximity and coordination between projects, Altamont Corridor Rail Project displays and staff members were available to provide information and answer questions.

Scoping meeting at the Merced Community Senior Center

Several comment options were available at the meeting. Tables provided a place for people to sit down to compose their comments on the comment cards supplied, and a separate area was established for giving comments verbally to a court reporter. Large aerial maps of the project vicinity with lines representing the proposed alignment corridors based on the Statewide Programmatic EIR/EIS and the Bay Area to Central Valley Programmatic EIR/EIS were displayed on tables. Larger scale aerial maps of the station location area were also provided to facilitate discussions about potential station locations. Marking pens were available for attendees to use to write comments on the maps or indicate specific natural or community resources or areas of concern. Movable track curve and station area templates were available for both the large alignment maps and the station area map, respectively, to enable participants to understand how the proposed facilities could be sited in other areas along the project corridor. In addition, 11 x 17-inch (27.9 x 43.2-cm) map handouts depicting the programmatic alignments enabled attendees to draw their alignment and station location ideas. For native Spanish speakers, a staff member fluent in Spanish was present to assist with answering questions and submitting comments if needed.

2.1.3 Sacramento, January 27, 2010

On January 27, 2010, the Authority held a scoping meeting at the Amtrak Depot from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Sixty-four people signed in at the meeting, including representatives from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Caltrans District 3; California Department of Water Resources; California State Parks; cities of Elk Grove, Rancho Cordova, and Sacramento; Sacramento County; Sacramento Council of Governments; SJRRC/Altamont Commuter Express; Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District; Rail Passenger Association of California; Defenders of Wildlife; and Central Valley Rails to Trails Foundation.

Scoping meeting in Sacramento

The meeting was presented in an open house format, with information stations and staff available to answer questions through informal discussions. A welcome table provided an area to sign in, receive meeting handouts, ask questions, and receive general orientation. Attendees arrived at different times throughout the meeting. Poster displays on easels provided information for attendees about the California HST Project, high-speed trains, the Merced to Sacramento HST Section, alternatives analysis, and the environmental process. A 25-minute video presentation providing background information on the California HST Project played in a continuous loop. In addition, due to the proximity and coordination between projects, Altamont Corridor Rail Project displays and staff members were available to provide

information and answer questions.

Several comment options were available at the meeting. Tables provided a place for people to sit down to compose their comments on the comment cards supplied, and a separate area was established for giving comments verbally to a court reporter. Large aerial maps of the project vicinity with lines representing the proposed alignment corridors based on the Statewide Programmatic EIR/EIS and the Bay Area to Central Valley Programmatic EIR/EIS were displayed on tables. Larger-scale aerial maps of the station location area were also provided to facilitate discussions about potential station locations. Marking pens were available for attendees to use to write comments on the maps or indicate specific natural or community resources or areas of concern. Movable track curve and station area templates were available for both the large alignment maps and the station area map, respectively, to enable participants to understand how the proposed facilities could be sited in other areas along the project corridor. In addition, 11 x 17-inch (27.9 x 43.2-cm) map handouts depicting the programmatic alignments enabled attendees to draw their alignment and station location ideas. For native Spanish speakers, a staff member fluent in Spanish was present to assist with answering questions and submitting comments if needed.

2.1.4 Modesto, January 28, 2010

On January 27, 2010, the Authority held a scoping meeting at the Modesto Centre Plaza from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. One hundred thirty-one people signed in at the meeting, including representatives from the cities of Ceres, Modesto, Oakdale, Riverbank, and Turlock; Merced County; Stanislaus County; Stanislaus Council of Governments; SJRRC/Altamont Commuter Express; Modesto Chamber of Commerce; Riverbank Chamber of Commerce; Stanislaus Farm Bureau; Greater Merced High-Speed Rail Committee; Farmland Working Group; Latino Community Roundtable; Sierra Club; and Sustainable Action Modesto. In addition, representatives from the offices of Senator Cogdill, Representative Radonovich, Representative Cardoza, Assembly Member Galgiani, and Assembly Member Berryhill attended.

Scoping meeting in Modesto

Similar to the three earlier meetings, the Modesto meeting was presented in an open house format, with information stations and staff available to answer questions through informal discussions.

2.2 Summary of Outreach Activities

The scoping period officially began December 23, 2010, with the receipt of the NOP at the State Clearinghouse. However, outreach to stakeholders in the Merced to Sacramento corridor began earlier. Beginning outreach early improved awareness of the project so that, as the Authority began the scoping period, the stakeholders could be better prepared to offer pertinent comments. Activities included outreach to business and community groups, early agency coordination, and elected official briefings As a result, 50 briefings, workshops and other meetings were held between July 2009 and the end of January 2010. A listing of these outreach activities is shown in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1
Summary of Outreach Activities

Date	Organization/Individual	Topic
July 10, 2009	Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors, Supervisors Demartini and Chiesa	Merced to Sacramento Section and Altamont Section planning, upcoming scoping process
August 6, 2009	Environmental Council of Sacramento – Transportation, Air Quality, and Climate Change Committee presentation	California HST, Merced to Sacramento Section planning, upcoming scoping process
August 6, 2009	Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors, Board Vice Chair Jeff Grover, Supervisor William O'Brien, and Supervisor Dick Monteith	Merced to Sacramento Section project status, upcoming scoping process
August 18, 2009	Sacramento Council of Government staff	Merced to Sacramento Section project status, upcoming scoping process
August 24, 2009	Galt City Council, Darryl Clare	Merced to Sacramento Section project status, upcoming scoping process
August 26, 2009	Ceres City Manager	Merced to Sacramento Section project status, upcoming scoping process
August 28, 2009	Turlock City Manager	Merced to Sacramento Section project status, upcoming scoping process
August 28, 2009	Ceres Mayor and Councilmember Vierra	Merced to Sacramento Section project status, upcoming scoping process
September 2, 2009	City of Elk Grove Mayor Patrick Hume, and City Manager Laura Gill	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
September 2, 2009	Stockton Vice Mayor Katherine Miller and City Councilmembers Elbert Holman and Diana Lowerty	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
September 2, 2009	San Joaquin County Supervisor Ken Vogel	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
September 2, 2009	City of Turlock Mayor Lazar	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
September 8, 2009	Modesto City Council Meeting	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
September 8, 2009	Turlock City Council Meeting	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
September 15, 2009	Turlock Rotary Club presentation	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
September 15, 2009	Downtown Sacramento Partnership Executive Director Michael Ault	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
September 15, 2009	California Alliance for Jobs, Joe Cruz	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
September 15, 2009	Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors Meeting	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
September 17, 2009	Blue Yonder SIRS presentation	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
September 21, 2009	Sacramento Area Commerce and Trade Agency CEO Barbara Hayes	Merced to Sacramento Section project status

Table 2-1
Summary of Outreach Activities

Date	Organization/Individual	Topic
September 21, 2009	Sacramento City Councilmembers Rob Fong and Steve Cohn	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
September 25, 2009	Sacramento County Technical Working Group	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
September 30, 2009	Stockton Mayor Ann Johnston	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
September 30, 2009	San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors, Supervisors Carlos Villapudua and Steve Bestolarides	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
October 8, 2009	Turlock Chamber of Commerce meeting announcement	Notice of public information meeting in Merced
October 8, 2009	Modesto Chamber of Commerce meeting announcement	Notice of public information meeting in Merced
October 15, 2009	Breathe California of Sacramento – Emigrant Trails "Brown Bag"	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
October 18, 2009	SIRS Carmichael Chapter presentation	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
October 2009	Emailed press release to Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Stanislaus County stakeholders	California High Speed Rail stimulus funding
November 12, 2009	Altamont Corridor Scoping Meeting	Altamont Corridor project, with information on Merced to Sacramento HST available
November 13, 2009	Rail Policy Working Group Meeting	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
November 13, 2009	SACTO Board of Directors Meeting	HST presentation
December 2, 2009	Association for Commuter Transportation, Sacramento Chapter	HST presentation
December 2, 2009	Sacramento Area Commerce and Trace Agency Deputy Director Bob Burris	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
December 4, 2009	Modesto Councilmember Dave Geer	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
December 10, 2009	Roseville Mayor Gina Garbolino	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
December 16, 2009	Sacramento City Councilmember Kevin McCarty	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
December 16, 2009	Valley Vision CEO Bill Mueller	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
December 21, 2009	Central Valley Rail Policy Working Group Meeting	Merced to Sacramento Section project status

Table 2-1
Summary of Outreach Activities

Date	Organization/Individual	Topic
January 5, 2010	Galt City Council Meeting	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
January 5, 2010	Tracy City Council Meeting	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
January 5, 2010	Lathrop City Council Meeting	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
January 5, 2010	Manteca City Council Meeting	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
January 12, 2010	Manteca Chamber of Commerce Legislative Committee	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
January 12, 2010	Stockton City Council Meeting	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
January 12, 2010	San Joaquin County Board of Supervisors Meeting	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
January 12, 2010	Sacramento County Board of Supervisors Meeting	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
January 13, 2010	Elk Grove City Council Meeting	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
January 19, 2010	Rancho Cordova Rotary Club	Merced to Sacramento Section project status
January 28, 2010	Greater Stockton Chamber of Commerce Meeting	Merced to Sacramento Section project status

3.0 Scoping Summary of Issues

The goals of project scoping include identification of the range of alternatives and environmental effects that will require analysis in the EIR/EIS. The Merced to Fresno Section HST scoping process identified issues with proposed alignments and stations; suggestions for new or modified alignments, stations, and maintenance facilities; and areas of potential concern related to the proposed HST System. This section summarizes the comments received during the scoping process. Comments were submitted in the following ways:

- Comment forms and Draw-your-own maps submitted at scoping meetings
- Verbally to court reporters
- Map mark-ups
- Personal comment letters
- Mailed comment forms
- Emails
- Agency letters

The Authority received over 147 written and verbal public scoping comments and an additional 11 comments in rollout-map markups. Several individuals submitted two or more comments. Comments are summarized in Table 3-1 and reproduced in Appendices H and I, which should be referred to for their complete content.

The summary is divided into three major topic areas. Comments regarding protection of the environment are summarized first, followed by a summary of comments related to proposed alternatives and station locations. The table then summarizes comments related to connectivity and coordination with/impacts on other transportation facilities, alternative technologies, project funding and cost, and issues outside the scope of the Merced to Sacramento study area. Each topic area summary is organized by type of commenter (federal, state, regional, and local agencies; organizations and businesses; and public).

In general, the comments received addressed the following topics:

- The location of stations
- The location of the HST alignment
- The location of maintenance facility
- Connections to local and regional transit
- Fast-tracking of the project
- The benefits of HST, including air quality, congestion relief, and economic development
- Agricultural impacts
- Noise and vibration impacts
- Natural resource impacts
- Impacts on wildlife and habitat
- Public utility impacts
- Historic property impacts
- Restrictive permit requirements
- Cost and financing of the system
- Use of project labor agreements and U.S. labor and products for HST construction
- Power source and requirements
- Impacts on local business
- Employment opportunities
- Ridership estimates
- Property acquisition
- Displacement of people
- Park impacts
- Wind impacts
- Hazardous materials impacts
- Safety and security

3.1 Alternatives

The following discussion summarizes public comments received pertaining to route, alignment, and station location preferences for the Merced to Sacramento Section of the proposed project.

3.1.1 Stations

Most of the comments regarding station location referred to the Modesto station options. The majority of comments expressing an opinion, including the City of Modesto, preferred a Downtown Modesto location (approximately 15 comments) to the Amtrak location (two comments). One commenter would like stops at Modesto, Manteca, Stockton, and Lodi.

Several comments, including the City of Riverbank and the Riverbank Chamber of Commerce, requested that a high-speed rail station in Riverbank along the BNSF tracks at the former Sun Garden-Gangi tomato processing plant be studied due to its potential for transit-oriented development (TOD) because it could serve Modesto, Oakdale, Ripon, and Escalon. One commenter expressed concern over a possible station in Riverbank due to impacts on various resources.

The Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District suggested designing the Sacramento station to allow for a future extension directly to the San Francisco Bay Area due to anticipated increases in demand along the I-80 corridor.

3.1.2 Route

Most of the comments expressing a route preference indicated a preference for the UPRR corridor. Approximately 10 comments preferred the UPPR corridor in addition to those preferring the Downtown Modesto station, and two comments preferred the BNSF corridor. The representatives from the City of Escalon expressed opposition to the BNSF corridor alternative due to concerns regarding negative impacts on the city. The City of Elk Grove expressed a preference for an alignment along the UPRR corridor.

A. New Alternatives Proposed

Approximately 10 comments, including the representatives from the City of Merced, the Greater Merced High-Speed Rail Committee, and University of California-Merced, suggested an alternative beginning in the south on the BNSF tracks at Castle Commerce Center/former Castle Air Force Base and transitioning over to the UPRR corridor at some point south of Modesto before continuing north on the UPRR corridor to Sacramento. Supporters of this alternative stated that it would serve the downtowns of Sacramento, Stockton, and Modesto, and would also connect to Castle Commerce Center where they believe a heavy maintenance facility should be located.

Three comments, including from the City of Lodi, suggested continuing along the UPPR corridor through Lodi. The City of Turlock suggested an alignment west of Washington Road entirely bypassing the Turlock city limits or in the Golden State Boulevard median between Fulkerth/Hawkeye and the Golden State Boulevard overpass of the UPRR. UPRR suggested an alignment on the opposite side of State Route 99 between Manteca and Merced and joint use of a portion of UPRR's Sacramento Subdivision extending between Stockton (El Pinal) and the vicinity of the former WP Curtis Park Rail-yard for higher speed operations not exceeding 110 mph (177 kph).

Additional alternatives suggested a corridor, including a corridor along Interstate 5, the Sacramento Southern Railroad corridor west of I-5, using the rail on the west side of Stanislaus County along Highway 33, Highway 65, west of the urban areas with a connection via a transfer station and a 60-mph (97-kph) train to the urban cores, more overlap with the Altamont Commuter Express route Modesto

extension in the area north of Modesto to decrease cost, and a connection east from the UPPR corridor to the BNSF corridor roughly along Yosemite Avenue.

3.2 Summary Comment Tables

Table 3-1
Summary of Written Scoping Comments

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT		
Commenter	**Protection of the Environment – Comments**	**Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)**
FEDERAL AGENCIES		
U.S. Department of Interior Fish and Wildlife Service, Kathy Wood, Assistant Field Supervisor	The EIR/EIS should consider all federally listed species within the HST action area. We are concerned about the potential adverse effects on federally listed species pursuant to the Endangered Species Act, including the federally listed as threatened giant garter snake (*Thamnophis gigas*); vernal pool fairy shrimp (*Branchinecta lynchi*) (branchiopods); slender Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia tenuis);* California tiger salamander (*Ambystoma californiense*) (salamander); and the valley elderberry longhorn beetle (*Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*) (VELB); the federally listed as endangered vernal pool tadpole shrimp (*Lepidurus packardi*) (branchiopods) and the Sacramento Orcutt grass (*Orcuttia viscida*).	3.7 Biological Resources and Wetlands
	To avoid and minimize and ensure no net loss from the impacts of the proposed HST on federally listed species, we recommend that the Authority incorporate nondiscretionary conservation measures into the project description.	
	Review of the following documents while analyzing the potential effects of the HST: December 2005 Recovery Plan for Vernal Pool Ecosystems of California and Southern Oregon, July 1999 VELB Conservation Guidelines, Giant Garter Snake Avoidance and Minimization Measures, and the 1998 Recovery Plan for Upland Species of the San Joaquin Valley.	
	Effects from the proposed HST are likely to occur from habitat fragmentation, and/or indirect and direct impacts. Conservation measures could include appropriately placed overcrossings and/or underpasses to facilitate the movement of species throughout the San Joaquin Valley and perhaps serve to completely avoid federally listed species and their habitats entirely. The proposed conservation strategy should include measures to avoid and minimize and ensure no net loss for any potential adverse impacts on federally listed species.	
	Recommend the Authority coordinate directly with the San Joaquin Council of Governments regarding effects of the proposed HST traversing through the designated San Joaquin County Multi-Species Conservation and Open Space Plan areas.	

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	In Merced County there are preserved vernal pools which are habitat for federally listed branchiopods and salamanders. These pools are located east of Highway 99 and the BNSF railroad corridor on the former Castle Air Force Base property. We strongly encourage the Authority to avoid affecting these species.	
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Connell Dunning, Transportation Team Supervisor, Environmental Review Office, Communities and Ecosystems Division	Appreciate the close working relationship we have had with the Authority and the FRA as a cooperating agency on the previously completed statewide programmatic EIS documents. Accept the invitation to become a participating agency.	Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement
	If properly planned, EPA would support the concept of a HST System in California that can provide an alternative to increasing vehicle miles traveled and lead to reduced environment impacts.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
	We recommend that the Authority and the FRA follow through with the mitigation measure commitments made in the statewide Tier 1 Final Programmatic EIS (attached measures form Bay Area to Central Valley HST Final Program EIR/EIS).	Chapter 3 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences
	AQUATIC RESOURCES	
	The Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 404(b)(1) Guidelines state that no discharge of dredged or fill material shall be permitted if there is a practicable alternative to the proposed discharge which would have less adverse impact on the aquatic ecosystem so long as the alternative does not have other significant adverse environmental consequences. While EPA has concurred that the HST alternative alignment identified in the Programmatic EIS is most likely to contain the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative (LEDPA), the Authority and the FRA will have to demonstrate in the Draft EIS that potential impacts on waters of the U.S. have been avoided and minimized to the maximum extent practicable prior to obtaining a CWA Section 404 permit.	3.8 Hydrology and Water Resources
	Identify alignments and design measures and modifications to avoid and minimize impacts for water resources. Quantify the benefits achieved for each alternative studied. If these resources cannot be avoided, the Draft EIS should clearly demonstrate how cost, logistical, or technological constraints preclude avoidance and minimization of impacts	
	Identify all projected resources with special designations and all special aquatic sites and waters within state, local, and federal protected lands. Additional steps should be taken to avoid and minimize impacts on these areas.	

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Include a compensation proposal for unavoidable impacts on CWA-regulated waters that complies with new regulations for compensatory mitigation promulgated in April 2007.	
	Estimate waters of the U.S. within the project area using CWA jurisdiction determinations, which should be submitted to the Army Corps of Engineers for verification. Provide maps of the estimated or verified CWA jurisdictional determinations.	
	Provide specific descriptions of proposed activities in CWA-regulated waters, including grading plans and cross sections.	
	Include the classification of waters and the geographic extent of waters and adjacent riparian areas. Characterize the functional conditions of waters and adjacent riparian areas.	
	Describe extent and nature of stream channel alteration, riverine corridor continuity, and buffered tributaries	
	Include wildlife species affected that could reasonably be expected to use waters or riparian habitat and sensitive plant taxa associated with waters or riparian habitat.	3.7 Biological Resources and Wetlands
	Analyze potential flood flow alteration.	3.8 Hydrology and Water Resources
	Characterize the hydrologic linkage to any impaired water body.	
	Analyze potential water quality impact and potential effects on designated uses. Address techniques proposed for minimizing surface water contamination due to increased runoff from additional impervious surfaces.	
	To demonstrate compliance with CWA Guidelines, the Authority and the FRA must explore onsite alternatives to avoid or minimize impacts on specific waters. Typically transportation projects can accomplish this by using spanned crossings, arched crossings, or oversized buried box culverts over drainages.	
	The Draft EIS should include a complete systematic analysis for drainage crossings which identifies and prioritizes the potential for improvements to the aquatic system and for wildlife use at each crossing as applicable.	
	Temporary and permanent impacts on waters of the U.S. for each alternative studies should be quantified and reported in table form.	

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES AND IMPACTS ON WILDLIFE	
	The Draft EIS should address wildlife movement impacts and commit to mitigating measures if appropriate. Proposed stream and wash crossings should be designed to maintain or improve existing wildlife passages.	3.7 Biological Resources and Wetlands
	Describe efforts to avoid or minimize impacts on threatened or endangered species and associated habitats, as well as preserves, parks, and restoration and habitat management areas.	
	Describe the extent and nature of protected species and their primary habitats and potential impacts on proposed and designated critical habitat.	
	Provide a description of narrow endemics, unique habitat elements, and suitable habitat for native fauna and flora in the project area, and the extent that each alternative may affect each resource.	
	Commit to measures to minimize or avoid impacts and quantify resources avoided. Incorporate information developed for the California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project and identify how project alternatives have been designed to allow for continued wildlife movement.	
	Use data developed for the statewide California Wildlife Action Plan to inform the siting of project alternatives and mitigation. Identify specific design changes proposed to avoid resources.	
	If applicable, disclose how fencing the train route will affect wildlife movement and discuss how fencing for safety purposes will be integrated with proposed wildlife passages such as culverts, bridges, viaducts, underpasses, and overpasses.	
	GREEN DESIGN AND OPERATIONS	
	Include a commitment to achieving Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum certification for the proposed stations.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.6 Public Utilities and Energy
	Identify measures to conserve water and manage storm-water runoff. Recommend implementation of "green Infrastructure" in onsite storm-water management features – bioretention areas, vegetated swales, porous pavement, and filter strips.	3.8 Hydrology and Water Resources
	Identify measures to produce energy onsite and incorporate them into the design of the station, rail and maintenance facilities.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.6 Public Utilities and Energy

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Identify in the Draft EIS estimates of energy savings from proposed measures to improve efficiency through materials, lights, insulation, and operations. Commit to industrial materials recycling or reuse or recycling of byproduct materials generated from industrial processes. Nonhazardous industrial materials such as coal ash, foundry sand, construction and demolition materials, slags, and gypsum are valuable products.	3.6 Public Utilities and Energy
	Develop an Environmental Management System (EMS) for the proposed facility.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.6 Public Utilities and Energy
	RELATIONSHIP TO REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS	
	Address how the project will ensure that potential duplication of efforts and incompatibilities with other rail and/or transit systems will occur.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation
	Identify integration and/or incompatibility of the project with other existing proposed projects.	
	Identify the specific features of the project that are being designed to link up with the other transportation, commuting, and transit proposals in the region.	
	LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION LINKAGES	
	Identify all transportation improvements proposed to provide access to the proposed project from anticipated key rider groups in the Bay Area and Central Valley, including transit connections, new methods to move people while reducing congestion, and increased bus service.	3.2 Transportation
	Analyze and disclose the temporary and permanent environmental impacts of constructing stations, parking facilities, maintenance and storage facilities, power propagation infrastructure, and required road developments and modifications.	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
	Demonstrate avoidance and minimization measures to reduce environmental impacts associated with the construction of passenger stations and maintenance facilities, such as multi-level parking structures as opposed to large expansive parking lots.	
	Indentify where proposed stations, parking, and additional required infrastructure will be located and disclose the associated impacts from station development on planned and unplanned growth.	

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Identify parties responsible for mitigating the environmental impacts associated with the indirect and cumulative impacts of the projected land use changes. Identify the timeline for improvements and maintenance.	
	Minimize the number of parking spaces to the greatest extent possible at the station in order to facilitate the use of transit; coordinate with other transit providers to maximize station access by transit, design the new facilities to be pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly, in addition to linking with other modes of transit; and support policies that will increase density and mixed uses in the station areas.	
	NOISE AND VIBRATION IMPACTS	
	All noise impacts should be fully analyzed and presented in the Draft EIS, and the Draft EIS should include commitments to implement measures to adequately mitigate noise impacts associated with the project.	3.4 Noise and Vibration
	The Draft EIS should address nocturnal and diurnal impacts on wildlife activities that may be affected by new noise and vibration introduced to natural habitats.	
	ENERGY RESOURCES	
	Identify the number and capacity of energy facilities that were either operational or under construction as of 2008 and discuss whether the future supply is expected to be adequate to meet growth in demand, given the number of power plants planned.	3.6 Public Utilities and Energy
	Discuss the cumulative impact of other reasonable foreseeable projects that will also increase demand on the existing energy supply. Reasonably foreseeable projects include the overall HST System; the extension of Bay Area Rapid Transit to Warm Springs, San Jose, and Santa Clara; the extension of light rail projects in San Jose; Caltrain electrification; and Dumbarton Rail Corridor.	
	AIR QUALITY	
	Provide a detailed discussion of ambient air conditions, nonattainment areas, and potential air quality impacts of the project for construction and operation (including cumulative and indirect impacts) for each alternative. Disclose the available information about the health risks associated with vehicle emissions, sensitive receptors in the project vicinity, and how the proposed project will affect current emission levels.	3.3 Air Quality

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Work with the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD), San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD), Caltrans, and the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG), and the San Joaquin Council of Governments (SJCOG) to ensure that methods to estimate emissions and anticipated emissions values from the proposed project are consistent with Air Quality Management Plan and RTP conformity determinations.	
	Use the most current EPA-approved model to estimate emissions. Include an identification of potential hotspot impacts, especially where parking lots, idling locomotives, idling buses, and road modifications are proposed.	
	The Draft EIS should demonstrate that Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or Federal Transit Administration-funded or –approved project elements are included in a conforming transportation plan and a transportation improvement program.	
	In light of the serious health impacts associated with particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter ($PM_{2.5}$, fine particulate matter) and diesel exhaust exposure, we recommend that the best available control measures for these pollutants be implemented at all times and recommend that a Construction Emissions Mitigation Plan be incorporated into the Draft EIS. All SMAQMD and SJVAPCD requirements and additional measures (listed in letter) should be incorporated into the Construction Emissions Mitigation Plan. EPA recommends measures to reduce the impacts resulting from future construction associated with this Project (listed in letter).	
	EPA recommends the Draft EIS should ultimately identify the cumulative contribution and reductions to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions that will result from implementation of the project. We also recommend that the Draft EIS discuss the potential impacts of climate change on the project and identify if there are specific mitigation measures needed. Any design and operation measures that can be identified as reducing GHGs should be identified with an estimate of the GHG emissions reductions.	
	CUMULATIVE IMPACT ANALYSIS	
	The cumulative impact analysis should consider transportation and non-transportation projects such as large-scale developments and approved urban planning projects that are reasonably foreseeable and are identified within city and county planning documents.	3.19 Cumulative and Secondary

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Describe the identifiable present effects to various resources attributed to past actions to determine the current health of resources. This information forms the baseline for assessing potential cumulative impacts. Identify the current condition of the resource as a measure of past impacts; for example, the percentage of wetlands lost to date.	
	Identify the future condition of the resource based on an analysis of the cumulative impacts of reasonably foreseeable projects or actions added to existing conditions and current trends. Identify the trend in the condition of the resource as a measure of present impacts.	
	Identify potential large, landscape-level, and regional impacts as well as potential large-scale mitigation measures. The cumulative impact analysis should guide minimization measures and mitigation efforts. Disclose parties responsible for avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating impacts as well as a timeline for implementing mitigation measures. EPA recommends that the Authority and the FRA use the Caltrans cumulative impacts guidance.	
	GROWTH INDUCEMENT ANALYSIS	
	EPA recommends that the Authority and the FRA make both the methodology and the assumptions in the growth-inducing analysis as transparent as possible to the public and decision makers. Identify the land use model used and the assumptions used in the model, discuss their strengths and weaknesses, and describe why the model and assumptions were selected. Ground-truth the results of the land use model.	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
	Use the results of the growth inducement analysis to inform station locations, and parking lot size and locations, as well as mitigation measures to reduce environmental impacts.	
	Use the results of the growth-inducement analysis to estimate growth-inducement impact on CWA regulated waters and inform LEDPA identification.	
	Identify station locations that are currently zoned for high-density development and those that are not. Address potential growth-related mitigation efforts, including incentives and other mechanisms to encourage TOD and measures to increase the capacity of city/county high-density planning efforts.	
	Use FHWA and Caltrans growth-related impacts guidance.	
	ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE	
	Identify how the proposed alternative may affect the mobility of low-income or minority populations in the surrounding area.	3.12 Socio Economics Communities and

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Provide specific, appropriate mitigation measure for any anticipated adverse impacts on community members.	Environmental Justice
	Include opportunities for incorporating public input to promote context-sensitive design, especially in Environmental Justice communities.	
	INVASIVE SPECIES	
	To the extent that this project will entail new landscaping and tree replacement, the mitigation measures should describe how the project will meet the requirements of Executive Order 13112 by using native species. Replacement of trees and re-vegetation should be coordinated with appropriate city and county urban foresters, and native species should be utilized where feasible.	3.7 Biological Resources and Wetlands; 3.8 Hydrology and Water Resources
TRIBES		
United Auburn Indian Community (UAIC), Greg Baker, Tribal Administrator	The UAIC is comprised of Miwok and Maidu people whose traditional homelands include portions of Placer, Nevada, and Yuba counties as well as some surrounding areas. The Tribe is concerned about development within ancestral territory that has potential to impact sites and landscapes that may be of cultural or religious significance.	3.15 Cultural Resources
	We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed project. We have no comments at this time. Please keep us on your mailing list.	
	In the event of an inadvertent discovery of prehistoric cultural resources or human burials during construction activities, the UAIC would like to be contacted immediately to provide input on the appropriate course of action.	
STATE AGENCIES		
California Department of Transportation, Tom Dumas, Chief, Office of Metropolitan Planning	Comments coordinated between Caltrans Districts 3, 10, and Headquarters. Caltrans and the Authority have executed a Master Agreement (MA) documenting the framework within which the two agencies will work together during the environmental review of each HST project section. The MA is the understanding that all work to be performed in the Caltrans right-of-way will be completed according to Caltrans standards.	3.2 Transportation; Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement
	Caltrans strongly encourages ongoing consultation and coordination with regional and local partners: cities and counties, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Regional Transportation Planning Agencies, and local and regional transit operators.	

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Consider current planned and future transportation projects along State highway facilities during all phases of project development. Transit improvements to increase mobility throughout the state highway system (SHS) should also be considered.	3.2 Transportation
	The project includes new HST stations that will result in traffic circulation reconfiguration and increased traffic volume accessing the HST stations. The impacts on the SHS should be included in the traffic impact study (TIS), with discussion of potential impacts on transit services.	
	The TIS must also include the project's near-term and long-term impacts on state facilities, existing and proposed, and include appropriate mitigation measures. TIS guidelines website location provided.	
	The geographic area examined in the traffic study should include as a minimum all regionally significant arterial system segments and intersections, including State highway facilities where the project will add over 100 peak-hour trips, which is the Caltrans maximum limit. State highways that already experience noticeable delays should be analyzed for projects that add 50 to 100 peak-hour trips. All freeway entrance and exit ramps within the study area should be analyzed. Data used in the TIS should not be more than 2 years old.	
	A focused analysis may be required for project trips assigned to a State highway facility experiencing significant delay, such as where traffic queues exceed ramp storage capacities. Focused analysis may also be necessary if there is an increased risk of a potential traffic accident.	
	Highway and rail maintenance protocols, known as Construction and Maintenance agreements, will be developed where facilities overlap.	
	All direct and cumulative impacts on the State highway system should be eliminated or reduced to a level of insignificance pursuant to CEQA and NEPA.	3.2 Transportation; 3.19 Cumulative and Secondary
	Mitigation measures for State facilities should be included in the traffic impact analysis. Mitigation indentified in the traffic study, subsequent environmental documents, and mitigation monitoring reports should be coordinated with Caltrans to identify and implement the appropriate mitigation that is compatible with Caltrans concepts.	3.2 Transportation

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	The Authority shall monitor impacts to insure that roadway segments and intersections remain at an acceptable Level of Service (LOS), but in no case shall the improvements negatively affect the intersections. Should the LOS reach unacceptable levels, the Authority should accelerate measures to fully mitigate impacts.	
	The Authority should coordinate with Caltrans regarding all alternatives impacting State right-of-way. Caltrans has identified several highways that may or will be affected by the construction of the HST: State Routes 51, 50, 99, 104, 59, 165, 108, 219, 132, 120, 33, 4, 88, 26, and 12.	
	Preliminary engineering plans for all alternatives should be submitted to Caltrans for evaluation and review as described in the MA. All future development adjacent to a State Route, whether the entitlement is deemed by the Authority to be discretionary or ministerial, should be submitted to Caltrans for review.	
	Examine the extent to which this service will provide convenient connections to all airports located in the Sacramento and San Joaquin counties. The HST alignment and stations may have direct impacts on exiting public-use airports. The transportation opportunities afforded to the traveling public and any potential change in the demand for airport facilities should be assessed. Other regional and county airports include Sacramento International Airport, Stockton Metropolitan Airport, Sharpe Army Air Field, Kingdon Airpark, Modesto City-County Airport, Livermore Municipal Airport, Sacramento Executive Airport, and Sacramento Mather Airport.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; 3.2 Transportation; Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement
	Consideration should also be provided to Sacramento Regional Transit since they are proposing a light rail route to Sacramento Airport and to Yolo Bus, which has existing service.	
	A traffic control plan (TCP) or construction TIS prepared in accordance with Caltrans' manual is required by Caltrans for approval prior to construction for work within or adjacent to Caltrans right-of-way.	Front Matter; 3.2 Transportation
	A transportation management plan (TMP) that identifies potential traffic delays and keeps the delays within Caltrans maximum limits must be prepared. Any proposed closures or detours must be approved by the District Traffic Manager.	
	All bus and rail transit providers affected by the project should be notified well in advance of construction in order to minimize any transit service disruptions.	3.2 Transportation

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Caltrans will review and comment on the effects within and next to the Caltrans right-of-way and documents shall contain the equivalent level of environmental analysis as found in the Caltrans Standard Environmental Reference.	Chapter 3 Affected Environmental and Environmental Consequences
	The Authority must satisfy storm-water requirements by complying with the Caltrans Construction General Permit of July 1, 2010, MS-4 NPDES Permit, Caltrans Storm-water Management Plan, and the Storm Water Quality Handbook.	3.8 Hydrology and Water Resources
	The Authority must address noise impacts caused by any changes in the vertical or horizontal alignment of a Caltrans roadway by following the Caltrans Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol.	3.4 Noise and Vibration
	A project of this complexity will require preparation of a Visual Impact Assessment technical report. Please refer to the guidelines in Chapter 27, Visual and Aesthetic Review of the Standard Environmental Reference.	3.16 Aesthetics and Visual Quality
	The EIR/EIS must include documentation of current archaeological record searches with the California Historical Resources Information System if construction activities are proposed within the State right-of-way. Record searches must be no more than 5 years old. The Department requires a record search, and if warranted, a cultural resource study. These requirements, including applicable mitigation, must be fulfilled before an encroachment permit can be issued for project-related work in the State right-of-way.	3.17 Cultural Resources
	Any work performed with Caltrans right-of-way will require discretionary review and approval by the Caltrans District in which it resides. Cost of improvement determines whether a Caltrans Encroachment Permit Process or Project Development Process will be required. All design and construction must be in conformance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.	Front Matter; 3.2 Transportation
	The Authority will not advertise the construction contract within Caltrans right-of-way until Caltrans issues an encroachment permit for the work.	
California Public Utilities Commission, Moses Stites, Rail Corridor Safety Specialist, Consumer Protection	Commission approval is required for the construction or alteration of crossings (Section 1201, State of California Public Utilities Code). Application to the Commission is required for construction of railroad across a public road. The design criteria of the project will need to comply with Commission General Orders 26-D, 72-B, 75-D, 88-B, 95, 118, and possibly others.	Front Matter, 3.2 Transportation, 3.6 Public Utilities and Energy, Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
and Safety Division, Rail Transit and Crossings Branch	The Commission recommends consolidation and grade separation of all existing at-grade crossings along any adopted alignment in the HST Project. Building a new at-grade railroad crossing can negatively impact safety of an existing crossing due to limiting the configuration of warning devices, limiting the geometry of roadway and sidewalk, and obstructing visibility of warning devices or an approaching train. The project needs to provide overall improvement by constructing a grade separation of all the tracks at each crossing.	3.2 Transportation
	It is strongly recommended that the HST operate on an entirely dedicated and fully grade-separated track. Incompatibilities with current railroad technology for Constant Warning Time Detection Systems may significantly compromise active warning devices.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Project Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation
	Consideration needs to be given to grade-separated structures that involve trenching the HST track. There are several grade-separated structures along the alignment that may be significantly impacted as such structures have the roadway elevated above the railroad tracks.	Chapter 2 Project Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation
	As construction of roadway grade-separation structures is likely to involve massive changes to public infrastructure and private property in the vicinity of railroad crossings, local entities must be allowed to amend their general plans and incorporate this HST Project into existing footprints to allow for future right-of-way preservation.	3.2 Transportation; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.18 Construction Methods and Impacts
	The majority of cities along the proposed corridor have built their downtowns around the tracks. The high-density areas near the tracks lead to a high amount of pedestrians around the tracks. Leaving the tracks at the current elevation is likely to result in trespassing issues similar to those currently experienced along the rail corridor. Elevating or lowering the tracks, particularly in the downtown areas, would mitigate trespassing concern. Vandal-resistant fencing or barriers along any remaining at-grade portions of the alignment should be a requirement of the project.	3.2 Transportation
	The Commission requests a more detailed proposal for the Merced to Sacramento HST Project. The comments offered by the staff are based on limited and generic information. All proposed grade-separated structure locations must be identified and all existing at-grade structure locations along any adopted alignment is required.	Chapter 2 Project Description
	Since the HST Project is solely dependent on an electrified train operation system, discussions in regards to the placement of electrical lines must be held with Commission staff so that existing utilities are not impacted and minimum required clearances are met.	3.6 Public Utilities and Energy

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Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	We request that an administrative draft of the Draft EIR/EIS be sent.	Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement
California State Water Resources, Division of Water Quality, Darrin Polhemus, Deputy Director	Potential to adversely impact water quality and beneficial uses.	3.6 Biological Resources and Wetlands; 3.7 Hydrology and Water Resources; 3.16 Cumulative Impacts
	State Water Board will issue certifications for all sections of HST System.	
	Projects subject to State Water Board permitting must avoid and minimize impacts on all waters of the State to the maximum extent practicable and ensure no net loss of wetlands.	
	Draft EIR/EIS must identify selected routes, all project infrastructure, and all waters of the state.	
	Ensure that all responsible agencies under CEQA are consulted.	
	Project design should include scientifically based buffers.	
	When avoidance is infeasible, specify construction and maintenance measures to minimize disturbance.	
	Mitigate unavoidable impacts; Draft EIR/EIS should discuss likely mitigation approaches.	
	Effects on aquatic resources should be evaluated using a watershed approach.	
	Incorporate low-impact development.	
	Consideration of effects of proposed change in flow on current patterns, water circulation, normal water fluctuation, salinity, changes to bottom contours or hydrologic regime.	
	Water quality considerations should be included.	
	Describe potential impacts on animal and plant species habitat and commit to habitat preservation measures that protect water quality species movement and habitat needs.	
	Include provisions for inspecting and monitoring the project for environmental compliance, suggested qualifications for inspectors.	
	Avoid special areas, areas of ecological integrity.	
	Discuss cumulative effects and incorporate design modifications that re-establish or improve on current environmental conditions to lessen cumulative effects.	

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Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), Katy Sanchez, Program Analyst	To adequately assess and mitigate project-related impacts on archaeological resources, the NAHC recommends the following actions: 1) Contact the appropriate Regional Archaeological Information Center for a record search. 2) If an archaeological inventory survey is required, the final stage is the preparation of a professional report detailing the findings and recommendations of the records search and field survey. 3) Contact the NAHC for a Sacred Lands File Check and a list of appropriate Native American contacts for consultation. 4) Lack of surface evidence of archaeological resources does not preclude their subsurface existence. Lead agencies should include in their mitigation plan provisions for the identification and evaluation of accidentally discovered archaeological resources, for the disposition of recovered artifacts, and for discovery of Native American human remains.	3.15 Cultural Resources
REGIONAL AGENCIES		
Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, Paul Philley, Assistant Air Quality Planner/Analyst	The project may result in cumulatively significant GHG emissions during both construction and operation. Have a climate change section discuss the regulatory framework of (GHG) emissions and make a determination of significance based from that framework and an analysis of construction and operation emissions from the project. Include mitigation measures to address significant GHG emissions.	3.3 Air Quality; 3.17 Cumulative and Secondary Effects
	Define any impacts on walking and cycling, such as paths, sidewalks, streets, and easements that will be closed (permanently or temporarily) by the project and identify appropriate mitigation measures.	3.2 Transportation
	The project may result in significant emissions of criteria pollutants during construction. Projects that produce more than 85 lbs of oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) during construction significantly contribute to ozone formation in the District and require mitigation. The Authority should model emissions from construction and propose mitigation consistent with the District's Guide to Air Quality Assessment for all construction activities within the District (www.airquality.org/ceqa/ceqaguideupdate.shtml).	3.3 Air Quality
	The project will be subject to all SMAQMD rules applicable at the time of construction, including, but not limited to those attached (Rule 201 General Permit, 403 Fugitive Dust, 417 Wood Burning, 442 Architectural Coatings, 902 Asbestos).	3.3 Air Quality; 3.10 Hazardous Materials/Wastes
San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, Stacey Mortensen, Executive Director	Minimize overall impacts to prime farmland and associated operations.	3.14 Agricultural Land

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, David Warner, Director of Permit Services	The District is a strong supporter of the proposed HST System and recently adopted a plan that included a number of "Fast Track" measures to accelerate attainment of the NAAQS for ozone. Implementation of HST is one of the measures the District included in that plan.	3.3 Air Quality
	District staff is available to provide technical assistance.	
	The District recommends that environmental review of the project's potential impact on air quality include the following: • Description of the regulatory environment and existing air quality conditions. • Description of the project, including a discussion of existing and post-project emissions, including emissions from short-term activities such as construction and emissions from long-term activities such as operational and area wide emissions sources. • Impact resulting from emissions generated by stationary and mobile sources should be analyzed separately. • Emission reductions achieved through compliance with District rules and regulations should be included in the analysis. • Emission reduction associated with the decrease in vehicle miles traveled due to the HST System should be included in the emissions analysis. • The project should be considered to have a significant adverse impact on air quality if emissions from either source exceed limits listed. • A discussion of whether the project would result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant or precursor for which the San Joaquin Valley Air Basin is in non-attainment. • At this time there are no established significance thresholds for GHG emissions; however, it is suggested that the EIR include a discussion of GHG emissions generated by the project and the effect they will have, if any, on global climate change.	
	If any portion of the project is near residential/sensitive receptors, that portion of the project should be evaluated to determine the potential health impact of toxic air contaminants (TACs) on nearby receptors. Prior to conducting a health risk assessment (HRA), the Authority may perform a prioritization on all sources of emissions to determine if it is necessary to conduct an HRA. If the project has a prioritization score of 10 or more, the project has the potential to exceed the District's significance threshold for health impacts of 10 in a million. If the prioritization score indicates that TACs are a concern, the District recommends a HRA be performed.	

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	A discussion of whether the project would create nuisance odors should be included in the EIR/EIS.	
	A discussion of the methodology, model assumptions, inputs, and results used in characterizing the project's impacts on air quality should be included.	
	A discussion of feasible measures that will reduce air quality impacts should be included.	
	The project would be subject to District Rule 9510 (Indirect Source Review) intended to mitigate a project's impact on air quality through project design elements or by payment of applicable offsite mitigation fees. An Air Impact Assessment application is required no later than when the final discretionary approval is sought. Applicable offsite mitigation fees must be paid before issuance of the first building permit. The District recommends that demonstration of compliance with Rule 9510 be made a condition of project approval.	
	This project may require District permits. Prior to construction, the Authority should submit to the District an application for an Authority to Construct.	Front Matter; 3.3 Air Quality
Southgate Recreation and Park District, Roxie Anderson, Planner/GIS Analyst II	Both the UPRR and the CCT alignments run through the Southgate Recreation and Park District, which is responsible for the planning of parkland, open space and recreational facilities, and for the ownership and maintenance of existing facilities within district boundaries in the south Sacramento area.	3.15 Parks, Recreation and Open Space
	The District requests than an analysis be included of the impacts to the following park and trail facilities, as well as creek crossings adjacent to the UPRR and the CCT corridors, especially as thye relate to Aesthetics and Visual Quality Noise and Vibration, Biological Resources, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use/Planning, Air Quality, Public Services/Recreation, Transportation/Circulation, Safety/Security and Construction Impacts: Adjacent to UPRR: Florin Creek, Elder Creek, Cottonwood Park, Hardester Park, Illa Collin Park, Danbury Parkway, Tillostson Parkway and Trail, Union House Creek, Strawberry Creek Adjacent to CCT: Elder Creek, Gerber Creek, North Vineyard Station Detention Basin, Bradshaw Vineyards Park, Laguna Creek Parkway and Trail, Silver Leaf Park	3.15 Parks, Recreation and Open Space
	The Sacramento County Draft Bicycle Master Plan (August 7, 2009) identifies the CCT corridor as a planned bicycle facility and the Central Valley Rails to Trail Foundation has also identified the CCT corridor as a future rails to trails project.	3.2 Transportation; 3.15 Parks, Recreation and Open Space

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Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	The District requests that the EIR/EIS assess how the establishment of the HST Project along the CCT corridor and the UPRR will affect the various land use planning efforts, including and surrounding these corridors. The CCT runs through the following County Planning Areas: Florin-Vineyard Community Plan, North Vineyard Station Specific Plan and Vineyard Springs Comprehensive Plan. The UPRR runs adjacent to the Florin-Vineyard Community Plan and through the Old Florin Town Special Plan Area. The District has been working with developers and the County to identify park sites, bicycle/pedestrian trails, and open space including creek corridors within these plan areas.	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.18 Construction Methods and Impacts
	The District is willing to coordinate with the Authority and related agencies to determine sufficient mitigation measures to minimize the effects of significant impacts and maximize the availability of public services and recreational facilities throughout the District.	3.15 Parks, Recreation and Open Space
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
City of Elk Grove, Tiffani Fink, Transit System Manager	The Old Town of Elk Grove is on the National Register of Historic Places. Additional analysis of potential impacts, such as noise, aesthetics, and traffic should be given to this area. The alignment should be grade-separated, and the City's preference would be to consider utilizing below-grade separations in the City. If the proposed project includes construction of overhead utilities or other facilities, the document should discuss the adverse aesthetic impacts of these facilities.	3.16 Aesthetics and Visual Quality; 3.17 Cultural Resources
	Analyze potential adverse impacts from train noise and vibration to sensitive receptors along the railroad corridor. The City has established Quiet Zones along the UPRR. The proposed project may require additional measures to maintain the Quiet Zone.	3.4 Noise and Vibration
	Evaluate the traffic impacts at all proposed at-grade crossings within the City of Elk Grove consistent with the City's traffic impact guidelines. The document will need to analyze impacts in terms of delays at key collector roads and to the transit system connectivity.	3.2 Transportation
	Discuss whether there may be impacts on the City's public services in terms of any special emergency response requirements of the HST System. Discuss the need to provide upgraded railroad crossing equipment.	3.11 Safety and Security
	Analyze the impacts on existing development if any additional setbacks beyond those currently required for the railroad.	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use

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Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Delays to the bus feeder systems and a demand analysis of new services to serve the rail line should be included.	3.2 Transportation
	The City of Elk Grove General Plan has identified a location for a future train station in the southwest quadrant of the Sheldon Road/Elk Grove-Florin Road intersection and identifies a proposed light rail alignment for the future expansion of light rail.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; 3.2 Transportation; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
	The EIR/EIS should examine the accessibility of Elk Grove residents to the HST System, specifically the feasibility of connections to a stop in Elk Grove using the Sheldon/Elk Grove-Florid Road train station.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation
	The development of the proposed project should not divert existing transportation program funding from being completed.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
City of Lodi, Phil Katzakian, Mayor	The alignments depicted that run east of the City of Lodi would sever existing farmland areas north and south of the City of Lodi.	3.14 Agricultural Land
City of Modesto, Jim Ridenour, Mayor	Strong supporter of the HST and the station in Modesto. City Council directed staff to make necessary amendments to the Urban Area General Plan and approved the Memorandum of Understanding for the High-Speed Rail Merced-to-Sacramento Working Group.	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement
	Modesto supports Policy V.6.K of the Modesto Urban Area General Plan, which encourages and supports the proposed project through the San Joaquin Valley and the development of the HST and regional rail station within the City.	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
	The HST station in Downtown Modesto along the UPRR is best-suited to meet the transportation needs of Stanislaus County, serving the largest communities, including Turlock and Ceres, as well as communities on the west side of the county, improving ridership and reducing trips.	3.2 Transportation

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Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	The Modesto Urban Area General Plan identifies the Downtown Redevelopment Area as the focal point of community life and the social, cultural, business, governmental, and entertainment center of the northern San Joaquin Valley.	3.12 Socio Economics, Communities and Environmental Justice; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
	An HST station in Downtown Modesto supports Goal 3 of the Modesto Redevelopment Area Master Plan, which encourages higher density, mixed use development in downtown, and the development of rail transit.	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
	An HST station in Downtown Modesto will be a catalyst for investment in and revitalization of the downtown and will promote infill development and TOD, reduction of sprawl, and preservation of farmland.	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.14 Agricultural Land
	Modesto is preparing a form-based code for downtown Modesto that would allow greater development densities than currently allowed and would require buildings to be oriented to streets and sidewalks, supporting transit service and pedestrian traffic.	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
	There could be a noise impact on Tuolumne River Regional Park, through which the alignment passes.	3.15 Parks, Recreation and Open Space
City of Riverbank, J.D. Hightower, Community Development Director	Regardless of the station location, Riverbank looks forward to partnering with the Authority in preparing an EIR that addresses potential impacts on each of the following:	
	Riparian habitat;	3.7 Biological Resources and Wetlands; 3.8 Hydrology and Water Resources
	Recreational resources at our river park, Jacob Myers Park, due to a crossing over the Stanislaus River;	3.15 Parks, Open Space and Recreational Resources
	The Riverbank Storm-water Management Basin #1, public sewer service, and the Riverbank Wastewater Treatment Plant;	3.6 Public Utilities and Energy

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Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	The State Route 108 overpass and local traffic circulation, including to and from the First Street Bridge;	3.2 Transportation
	The City of Riverbank Corporation Yard;	3.6 Public Utilities and Energy
	Noise at residences in close proximity to the proposed corridor; and	3.4 Noise and Vibration
	Community character and design impacts in terms of community connectivity and environmental justice.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Communities and Environmental Justice
City of Turlock, Debra Whitmore, Deputy Director of Development Services/Planning	The City provided staff with copies of the city's General Plan and associated environmental documents.	Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement
	If right-of-way is taken on the west side of the UPRR, local frontage roads, linear parks planned as buffers to the UPRR, residential properties, major retail centers, and industrial businesses would be negatively impacted by the acquisition for HST. Widening to the west would also require removal of some parking areas for the Stanislaus County Fairgrounds.	3.2 Transportation; 3.12 Socioeconomics, Communities and Environmental Justice; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.15 Parks, Open Space and Recreational Resources
	West side of UPRR: At the north end of the City, the drainage basin serving most of the Northwest Triangle Specific Plan area would be negatively affected.	3.8 Hydrology and Water Resources
	East side of UPRR: Golden State Boulevard would be negatively impacted on the north and south end of the City. Through the historic Downtown Turlock area, commercial and industrial businesses would be negatively impacted.	3.2 Transportation; 3.12 Socioeconomics, Communities and Environmental Justice; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.17 Cultural Resources

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Acquisition on either side of the UPRR will eliminate and/or disrupt local frontage roads adjacent to the UPRR, and properties located along these frontage roads have no alternative access, potentially resulting in full takes of some of the properties and excess right-of-way with limited access remaining. The properties with limited use could result in blight. Many of these buildings are of historic character. The Authority should include the costs of planning and implementation of a master plan for reuse of these properties as mitigation.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Communities and Environmental Justice; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.17 Cultural Resources
	The General Plan calls for major road improvements to support development of the Southeast Master Plan area. Grade separation of the UPRR would be required. The addition of elevated tracks through the Southeast Master Plan area could increase the cost of potential roadway improvements and grade separations. These impacts could be mitigated by ensuring that the City is allowed to identify these roadway corridors and work directly with the Authority to develop plans for the HST corridor that accommodate future land use plans and transportation improvements. Other infrastructure improvements will need to pass through the future HST right-of-way. An advance agreement that would allow for local agencies to easily obtain public utility easements and facilitate local construction projects would also be needed.	3.6 Public Utilities and Energy; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
	The City has plans to expand the SR 99/Taylor Road interchange north of the City. This interchange is already challenged by an elevated structure for SR 99 and close proximity of the UPRR on the west side. Another elevated structure for HST has potential planning and cost implications. The City of Turlock requests that the expansion of this interchange be considered through the development of a project study report prior to finalizing HST design.	3.2 Transportation
	Elevating HST through the City of Turlock will require that the tracks be elevated above two major overcrossings – Golden State Boulevard at the southern end of the city and the SR 99 freeway at the northern end of the City. Golden State Boulevard is a major gateway to the Turlock downtown and industrial employment centers. Due to the relatively close proximity and existing height of these structures, the City is very concerned about the potential visual impacts of HST. The City has adopted a Beautification Master Plan that calls for all such impacts to be mitigated and provides guidelines on how this mitigation should be implemented. The City requests that landscaping be installed along the entire HST right-of-way as required by the zoning ordinance.	3.16 Aesthetics and Visual Quality

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Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	The City has identified major gas, fuel, and utility lines immediately adjacent to the UPRR, as well as those lines that run within the UPRR right-of-way. Use of the right-of-way immediately adjacent to the UPRR may require relocation of these lines, which would create additional impacts. If such relocations are proposed, the HST EIR/EIS should provide information on where these utilities will be relocated, and should also evaluate the potential impacts of those relocations.	3.6 Public Utilities and Energy
	The UPRR alternative would result in a new source of noise immediately adjacent to residential development, churches, and other sensitive receptors.	3.4 Noise and Vibration
Merced County, John Pedrozo, Board of Supervisors	It is very important for the Merced-Sacramento route to continue for the Authority – it plays such an important part for the valley with the connectability for Merced and northern parts of California. It would be a great asset for northern California to be connected to the maintenance facility here in Merced. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives and Project Objectives
Sacramento County Department of Transportation, Matthew Darrow, Senior Transportation Engineer	Thank you for mailer announcing open house in Sacramento. We will send a representative to the meeting and request that the Sacramento County Department of Transportation continue to be kept in the loop on this project. We are interested in commenting on the details of this project as they pertain to unincorporated Sacramento County, specifically alignment, station location, etc.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement
San Joaquin County Community Development Department, Chandler Martin, Deputy Director of Planning	Include analysis of impacts on communities if the routes bisect or constrain any existing communities.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Communities and Environmental Justice
	Address the county's general plan objectives, policies, and implementation measures relative to transportation system design and management and transportation coordination with land use.	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
	Address constraints to land use (schools, parks, farms, libraries, hospitals, etc.) adjacent to the proposed rights-of-way.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Communities and Environmental Justice; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Address impacts on farmland and farming, including but not limited to the bisecting of parcels leaving lots without access, either by person, car, truck or tractor. Address construction and operational impacts on adjacent crops caused by dust.	3.14 Agricultural Land
	Address impacts on the Delta and waterways.	3.8 Hydrology and Water Resources
	Address impacts on utility corridors.	3.6 Public Utilities and Energy
ORGANIZATIONS, ASSOCIATIONS, & BUSINESSES		
California Farm Bureau Federation Natural Resources and Environmental Division, Christian Scheuring, Managing Counsel	Agricultural resources are an important feature of the existing environment of the State, and agriculture is the number one industry in California, which is the leading agricultural state in the nation. In order to ensure a healthy farming industry, the Legislature has declared that "a sound natural resource base of soils, water and air" must be sustained, conserved, and maintained. For both NEPA and CEQA, the physical environment includes agricultural lands and resources.	3.14 Agricultural Land
	Agricultural Resources must be considered in a legally defensible NEPA review. The Farmland Protection Policy Act requires that agencies consider the adverse effects of Federal programs on the protection of farmland and alternative actions, as appropriate, that could lessen such adverse effects. The CEQ and CEQA provide guidance regarding impacts on agricultural resources.	
	The agricultural lands surrounding the route must be accurately and completely depicted. The California Department of Conservation, through the farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program ("FMMP"), monitors changes in Prime farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Local Importance. The EIR/EIS must incorporate the FMMP Maps as a basis for its analysis. The acreage of farmland that will be converted and/or impacted from this project must be included in the EIR/EIS. Additionally, any other changes in the existing environment due to the project location or nature that could result in conversion of agricultural to nonagricultural use must also be examined. The Farm Bureau also recommends that an agricultural impact discussion for areas outside the Important Farmland Map boundaries be based on the agricultural land definition in the Williamson Act. This would also be in accordance with the definition of "agricultural land" in CEQA.	

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Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	The analysis should consider the construction of ancillary facilities and supporting infrastructure, as well as growth-inducing impacts and urban sprawl, especially on the urban fringe, and social and economic impacts. The permanent and temporary disturbances caused directly by construction activities must be fully analyzed in the EIR/EIS. The Authority should fully examine all future land use impacts that are likely to result from the project, especially since the Authority has stated that the Altamont Corridor will serve as a feeder to the statewide HST System and is consistent with future uses of the Bay Area Transit Plan.	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
	The Authority should examine all reasonable alternatives for the project (40 CFR). The range of alternatives must be feasible and must avoid or substantially lessen the project's significant environmental effects (Public Resources Code), even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives or would be more costly (California Code of Regulations).	3.14 Agricultural Land
	All impacts on agricultural resources must be fully mitigated. All feasible mitigation measures proposed in the EIR/EIS to address the impacts on agricultural resources must be fully described and impacts must be mitigated. Sufficient funding must be allocated for mitigation of agricultural land loss on a per acre basis. Under NEPA, the mitigation of impacts must be considered whether or not the impacts are significant.	
	This project must comply with the Williamson Act. Any discussions regarding mitigation for this project must include a discussion of the Williamson Act's policies regarding public acquisition of and public improvements within agricultural preserves and lands under Williamson Act contract. A public agency must consult with the Director of the Department of Conservation when it appears likely that a public improvement may be located in an agricultural preserve. The following specific information on the agricultural preserves and Williamson Act contracts in the project area must be included: 1) a map detailing the location of agricultural preserves and Williamson Act contracted land with each preserve and the total amount of acreage under contract and land type that could be either directly or indirectly impacted, and 2) impacts that public acquisition would have on nearby properties also under contract.	
	Public acquisition of property for this project must be limited. The least environmentally damaging and practicable alternative must maximize the use of property already owned by the government before acquiring private land. For land under Williamson Act contract, Code 51291(d) spells out requirements for government acquisition.	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.14 Agricultural Land

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	The EIR/EIS must also analyze the direct, indirect and cumulative impacts of this project on water quality, including indirect conversion of existing farmland for want of adequate and reliable water supply of sufficient quality. This analysis must involve an examination of water supply impacts and how they might impact the water supply otherwise available for production agriculture as well as alternatives for mitigation such as increased recharge.	3.8 Hydrology and Water Resources; 3.14 Agricultural Land
	Social and economic impacts must be analyzed. The siting of the HST through agricultural lands will greatly impact the agricultural industry as a whole, as well as local rural communities. These impacts can include a loss of jobs and sales tax revenue, which leads to a loss of social services and agriculture-related businesses.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Communities and Environmental Justice; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.14 Agricultural Land
Californians for High-Speed Rail, Brian Stanke, Executive Director and Daniel Krause, Board of Directors Vice Chair	Transportation mitigation strategies need to focus on the reduction of automobile trips generated (ATG) rather than the subsidization of automobile parking and access. Transportation mitigation strategies include: Transportation demand management (TDM) measures to be adopted by the station operator to mitigate (ATG). Use of the Natural Resources Agency 2009 Proposed Rulemaking to evaluate transportation impacts in a broader more multi-modal approach rather than the conventional intersection automobile LOS analysis. This includes use of ATG rather than LOS as the measure to mitigate. TDM measures adopted or committed to by the locality to mitigate traffic generation. Availability of current and planned local transit access to HST stations to mitigate traffic generation.	3.2 Transportation

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Chevron Environmental Management Company, Lee Higgins	Notifying Authority of location of formerly active crude-oil transportation pipelines along portions of the proposed HST alignment (map enclosed) for incorporation into future engineering and environmental documents. Former crude-oil pipelines known as the Old Valley Pipeline and Tidewater Association Oil Company were installed in the early 1900s and later decommissioned. Pipelines are between 18 to 10 inches (25 cm) below the ground surface and were typically steel pipelines encased in a protective coating composed of primer, coal tar, and asbestos-containing felt material. The degree and method of decommission varied; in some instances the pipelines were removed, while in others they remain in place. Evidence of historic releases associated with the former pipelines is sometimes identified during the course of underground utility work and other subsurface construction activities near the former pipeline rights-of-way. Analytical results from risk assessments at numerous release sites confirm that soil affected by the historic release of crude oil from the pipelines is nonhazardous and does not pose significant risks to human health. To facilitate the identification of HST infrastructure proposed for construction along the pipeline easements, Chevron requests geographic information system (GIS) project data and Chevron will provide GIS data that illustrates the location of the former pipelines along the HST route.	3.10 Hazardous Materials/Wastes
Law Offices of Stuart M. Flashman on behalf of California Rail Foundation and Transportation Solutions Defense and Education Fund, Stuart Flashman	The NOI references the SJRRC's interest in providing regional rail service within this section and connecting to the proposed Altamont Corridor Regional Rail Project, but neither the San Joaquin Regional Rail Project nor the Altamont Corridor regional rail service were considered or studied in the prior statewide program-level EIR/EIS. Therefore, it is improper for this EIR/EIS to tier off of the statewide EIR/EIS. Instead, this EIR/EIS should be a stand-alone document that fully examines all of the issues involved in this project, regardless of any prior study in the statewide Programmatic EIR/EIS. The Authority is currently revising the Bay Area to Central Valley Programmatic EIR/EIS, and that document is not suitable for a basis for tiering.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives
	Recently discovered information calls into question the ridership and revenue modeling included in the Bay Area to Central Valley EIR/EIS. This is another reason why that EIR/EIS should not be tiered off of at the project level. Ridership and revenue information for the current project-level EIR/EIS should be derived from fresh modeling and the modeling information fully and publicly disclosed so that it can be properly scrutinized.	3.2 Transportation
	One major concern is the proposed use of the UPRR right-of-way as the alignment for the Stockton to Sacramento portion of the route. The UPRR has made it clear that it will not allow the Authority to use any portion of its right-of-way and that it will defend its ability to access its customers along its existing right-of-way. My clients agree that maintaining the existing rail freight network and the ability of that network to expand in the future is important.	3.2 Transportation; 3.12 Socioeconomics, Communities and Environmental Justice

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Current rail freight operations use diesel locomotives, which are still far more efficient than using diesel trucks. It seems likely that future rail upgrades will involve conversion of rail systems to all-electric operation, allowing the use of renewable energy sources. For this reason, any action that interferes with current rail freight lines or hinders their potential expansion should be considered a significant environmental impact and discussed in the EIR/EIS.	3.2 Transportation; 3.3 Air Quality
	EIR/EIS should consider impacts on access to existing and foreseeable future users of freight service, including existing railway spurs.	3.2 Transportation
	EIR/EIS should consider impacts on health and safety due to risk of upset in either the HST System or adjoining conventional rail passenger or freight operations.	3.2 Transportation
	EIR/EIS should consider cumulative noise and vibration impacts from the HST system and adjoining conventional rail operations.	3.19 Cumulative and Secondary
	EIR/EIS should consider other cumulative impacts from the HST system and adjoining conventional rail operations.	
	If the current EIR/EIS is to move forward prior to the Authority's revisiting its alignment decision due to its December 11, 2009, rescission, it cannot assume that the HST connection to the Bay Area will be via the Pacheco Pass. Both Altamont and Pacheco Pass alignments should be considered in determining how this HST section will connect to the Bay Area.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives
Lodi Chamber of Commerce, Pat Patrick	Interested in knowing how the grade separation will be handled on county roads. Adjacent to Lodi there are seven major regional or county roads that come out of Lodi running east into wine tourism region and serving the population based to the east. How many of those regional county roads would be blocked vs. grade-separated? *(Verbal Comments -- Stockton Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation
Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates, Walt Seifert, Executive Director	Consider impacts of central business district stations vs. satellite station alternatives on bicycle travel and on air quality, GHG emissions, and energy use.	3.2 Transportation
	Project construction impacts on bicycle and pedestrian circulation should be considered.	
	Provision of bicycle and pedestrian facilities as part of the project may mitigate the project's construction and operations impacts on the environment. There are possibilities of providing access to bicyclists along the rail corridor and new bicycle/pedestrian crossings of the corridor, and including high-quality bicycle circulation and accommodation such as bike parking at stations and within station areas.	

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	A fully grade-separated HST will create barriers to bicycle circulation but also presents opportunities. Physical barriers will be difficult to cross and may increase trip lengths, which discourage bicycling and walking. As new crossings of the tracks are constructed or existing crossings modified or rebuilt, access by bicyclists and pedestrians should be taken into consideration and routinely provided. Additional bicycle/pedestrian crossings should be provided to maintain or improve bicycle and pedestrian levels of service.	
	As the CCT alignment alternative is evaluated, the possibility of a rails-with-trails design should be considered. In many areas the CCT right-of-way is 100 feet (30.2 meters) wide. If other segments of the corridor offer the opportunity for rails-with-trails, that possibility should be considered in those segments as well.	
	Bicycle parking at the station is important. Long-term bicycle parking at Dutch and German rail stations sometimes includes expensive but land-saving underground parking for thousands of bikes.	
	Local governments should be strongly encouraged to provide bicycle parking in each station area, within a minimum distance of 3 miles (4.8 kilometers [km]), including short-term and long-term bicycle parking.	
	Connectivity of streets in station areas, the accessibility of those streets, availability of shortcuts for pedestrians and cyclists, signage for way finding and bicycle parking, curb cuts near the station, station area maps, and signal detection and timing can all be important issues.	
San Joaquin Farm Bureau Federation, Phil Brumley, President	Concerned that new lines could induce unintended consequences such as growth in areas not traditionally the stage for such activities.	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.14 Agricultural Land
	Caution against creating a route that would divide agricultural parcels, which could create hardships for farmers and ranchers servicing their crops as well as unintended consequences with irrigation systems and conveyance facilities.	3.14 Agricultural Land
	Before the Authority commits to any route, we ask that all stakeholders involved and adjacent to these areas be notified and provided an opportunity to participate in development of the project.	3.14 Agricultural Land; Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement
	CEQA and NEPA require the EIR/EIS to fully evaluate the impacts on agricultural resources.	3.14 Agricultural Land

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Consider impacts on properties that are enrolled in the Williamson Act or that have U.S. Department of Agriculture-contracted projects in place.	
	We also request the Authority lay out the proposed plan for land acquisition and inform all landowners if there is any intention of using eminent domain in this process.	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.14 Agricultural Land; Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement
	Suggest that the Authority become familiar with local governing policies, including San Joaquin County's habitat conservation plan and agricultural mitigation programs, and lay out the Authority's mitigation plans with ample time for review.	3.7 Biological Resources and Wetlands; 3.14 Agricultural Land
Turlock Irrigation District, Steve Boyd	There are several public power utilities up and down the state that could work together to provide the power for the project and keep it completely public, which is better than an investor-owned utility. We could also have the utilities use renewable to make it better for the environmental. *(Verbal Comments – Modesto Scoping Meeting)*	3.6 Public Utilities and Energy
Union Pacific, Jerry Wilmoth, General Manager Network Infrastructure	UPRR's rail network in the Bay Area and the Central Valley is vital to the economic health of California and the nation as a whole. UPRR's rail service to freight customers in the Bay Area and Central Valley is crucial to the future success and growth of freight customers, as well as regional and local economies.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Communities, and Environmental Justice
	Certain safety risks are inherent in locating a HST adjacent to a 100-foot-wide freight rail right-of-way carrying mainline freight trains at speed. Major derailments still occur despite progress in reducing derailments. Some derailments may propel rail cars onto the tracks of an adjacent passenger operation. Some derailments also cause fires or explosions. A freight train derailment that coincides with passage of a 200-plus mph (322-plus km/h) HST train, which will not have the safety and structural protections of current passenger rail equipment, could result in a catastrophic accident. Although exceedingly rare, a derailment of a HST adjacent to a freight line could also compound the extent of the accident if a freight train were in the area. The Authority must consider and develop mitigation options for these risks that do not require the use of UPRR right-of-way.	3.11 Safety and Security
INDIVIDUALS / PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS		

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Bill Anelli	Locate the Modesto station in Downtown Modesto. Moving it to Claus will result in urban sprawl and we have enough sprawl as it is. Indirectly saves farmland.	3.12 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.14 Agricultural Land
	Downtown Modesto station will result in lower carbon footprint due to higher density and less auto travel	3.2 Transportation; 3.12 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
George Boodrookas	California's 110 community colleges are a resource for preparing the workforce related to this project. Utilizing an existing system will save dollars and increase efficiency. The college system is also developing a "Corporate College" which provides for a coordinated, multi-college approach to large projects. Contact information provided.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Communities, and Environmental Justice
John Bramble	Sacramento to Modesto – the UPRR alignment appears to minimize the reduction of farmland.	3.14 Agricultural Land
	Sacramento to Modesto – the UPRR alignment keeps the time of travel at a minimum.	3.2 Transportation
	Modesto to Merced – Either BNSF or UPRR is feasible, but remaining on the UPRR would keep the travel time reasonable.	3.2 Transportation
Michael Brennan	Minimize wildlife migration and habitat impacts.	3.7 Biological Resources and Wetlands
Kenneth R. Brown	With the depletion of fossil fuels, we need these forms of transportation.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives
Al Bulf	To power this rail line, I think they're going to have to build some nuclear power plants as well as a new electrical grid devoted entirely to high-speed rail as I have seen in other countries. It will work better and be more reliable. *(Verbal Comments – Sacramento Scoping Meeting)*	3.6 Public Utilities and Energy
	Approach the Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD) Board about purchasing the Rancho Seco Site for power plant siting since it is set up for that purpose already and electrical connections are there.	3.6 Public Utilities and Energy
	I was SMUD's high-speed rail person and was sent to the international high-speed rail convention in Las Vegas and understood there that high-speed rail needs its own power sources and grids; it can't be done by solar cells and windmills, and nuclear fills the place of that.	3.6 Public Utilities and Energy

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Ron Burch	It is important that the environmental agencies understand how a project like this is built. State agencies often agree to permit restrictions without taking into consideration that those restrictions will make it impossible to construct the project.	3.7 Biological Resources and Wetlands; 3.8 Hydrology and Water Resources
Stan Chance	Will homes along right-of-way have more noise?	3.4 Noise and Vibration
	Will it cause people to live farther from their employment vs. closer?	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
	Will it cause farm ground to be consumed faster due to increased rate of people moving to the valley?	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.14 Agriculture
	How can communities now change the way they think about land use that encourages use of high-speed rail and mass transit in general?	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
Brad Christian	Downtown location for Modesto station with TOD would encourage economic development and leverage transit and redevelopment dollars.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Communities and Environmental Justice; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
James Clarke	A station in Downtown Modesto will be less damaging environmentally versus citing the station in the east part near Riverbank, which will produce more disruption in terms of agricultural impact and environmental impact, and will encourage sprawl on the east side of the county. *(Verbal Comments – Modesto Scoping Meeting)*	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.14 Agricultural Land
Kathleen Clarke	In support of the Downtown Modesto station for convenience and reduced environmental impact due to less need for a car to get to the station.	3.2 Transportation

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Downtown Modesto station has better potential for infill development in the center of Modesto and maintains prime agricultural land.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.14 Agricultural Land
Alan Claunch	Is privately held land required to complete the project? If so, how many acres must be acquired?	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.14 Agricultural Land
	Will the train, tracks, and related hardware to be manufactured in the United States?	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice
	How will vehicular, pedestrian, and animal collisions be avoided or mitigated?	3.11 Safety and Security
	How will noise from the horns and vehicles be mitigated?	3.4 Noise and Vibration
Emily DeCremer	I am concerned that the estimated reduction of air pollution in the Central Valley is only 8%. I voted for 1A in hopes that the HST would have a significant impact on air quality. More detailed explanation of air quality benefits and attempts to focus on this issue would help appease my concerns.	3.3 Air Quality
Mary Eaton	I am looking forward to the HST coming to Atwater-Merced.	3.2 Transportation
Joel Epstein	If we want to join the Chinese and other innovators in finding solutions to our clean energy and infrastructure challenges, we need to wake up before we sleep through the Green Revolution.	3.2 Transportation; 3.3 Air Quality
Trudy Fassler	High-speed rail is a very important asset for the Central Valley; it will vastly improve travel through the Central Valley.	3.2 Transportation

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	I live along the BNSF proposed HST line, and have concern about impact on my property, amount of encroachment into our farm?	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.14 Agricultural Land
	Concerned about where the HST is proposed to go through the middle of Lakewood Cemetery north of the town of Hughson. Cemeteries are hallowed ground. Building over this burial ground must be carefully reviewed with careful scrutiny and respect.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice
	I would like information of the noise level of the HST – what decibel level, could it affect hearing?	3.4 Noise and Vibration
Laurie Fellezs	I believe HST is the only way to lessen unemployment by making it possible for residents of the Central Valley to access jobs in the Bay Area.	3.2 Transportation; 3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice
Robert Fenton	This will be a great project and will create 100s of jobs. We need construction jobs now and service jobs for the future.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice
Joe Feyder	It has been difficult to find opportunities to participate on the project as a small business. Attempts to contact the Authority have fallen on deaf ears. The small business outreach appears to be weak or non-existent.	Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement
James Gammon	Station in Downtown Modesto is preferable to protect our farmland and not pave or rail over our prime treasure here in the Central Valley. *(Verbal Comments – Modesto Scoping Meeting)*	3.14 Agricultural Land
Louise Gardner	I would like to know about the noise level of the train, inside and outside of the train.	3.4 Noise and Vibration

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Lisa Gorecki	I am ecstatic about the HST, the jobs it will bring to the Central Valley and the impact that it will have on efficient mobility within the state.	3.2 Transportation; 3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
Evelyn Halbert	There is a lack of communication with the residents (Riverbank). The local government in Riverbank has not had any public hearings on this matter, even though the council voted to pursue the station. I did not receive notice and I believe CEQA requires notification to all properties that could be affected.	Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement
	The BNSF goes through the middle of many small towns. Huge impact on the downtown core, historical area of the cities, and could divide cities. Historic structures cannot be replaced.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.17 Cultural Resources
	This project will destroy a lot of farmland. The price of food would go up and more jobs would be lost.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice; 3.14 Agricultural Land
	HST through Riverbank would come very close to the historical downtown area. How do you mitigate loss of historical significance?	3.17 Cultural Resources
	Rail along the BNSF would impact the sewer plant. What is HST's responsibility regarding this impact?	3.6 Public Utilities and Energy
	Rail along the BNSF would impact the river. How would you mitigate the impact?	3.8 Hydrology and Water Resources
	Jacob Meyers Park is directly in the path of HST (on BNSF). How would you mitigate impacts on the flora, fauna, river, and users of park?	3.7 Biological Resources and Wetlands; 3.15 Parks, Recreation and Open Space

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Rail along the BNSF would impact residences and businesses.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice
	HST in Riverbank would require widening roads, removing more residences and businesses. Who pays for the streets, lighting, landscaping, and maintenance?	3.2 Transportation
	How many will come to and leave the station?	3.2 Transportation
	How will you mitigate the increase in air pollution from this traffic?	3.3 Air Quality
	How will you mitigate the increase in noise from this traffic?	3.4 Noise and Vibration
	What is the noise decibel level and vibration level of HST and how will you mitigate it? What is the level of wind gusts from the HST? These issues will have a huge impact on the older structures.	
	What is the impact on the sewer, water, and storm-water systems form the proposed station and will the city have to finance those improvements?	3.6 Public Utilities and Energy
	How much land can the Authority take with eminent domain? Please provide the documents giving the Authority the legal power of eminent domain and the description of the extent of that power.	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use;
	How many jobs would the station provide for current residents of Riverbank? How many jobs will be lost due to removal of businesses and heavy loss of agriculture?	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice;
	South of Riverbank between Empire and Hughson and next to the BNSF tracks is the Lakewood Cemetery. HST would greatly impact the peace and serenity of the grounds. Would tracks go over it? How will you mitigate this?	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice
	While Modesto is the best choice of all the options, I do not support HST in Stanislaus County as I do not feel it is worth the loss of agriculture. The production of food should be our first priority.	3.14 Agricultural Land
Roland and Doris Heard	Escalon has problems with BNSF dividing the town – fire, police, ambulance, etc.	3.11 Safety and Security

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Gunnar Henrioulle	Let's require a new rail subway, a tube under the Sacramento River, orders of magnitude more justifiable than a sports complex at this transport bottleneck. Concerns regarding safety and security of stations and facilities.	3.11 Safety and Security
Jay Herbrand	Taking out prime agriculture land should be reduced even though cost is more for other alternative.	3.14 Agricultural Land
Diana Herrera	This is a great project for jobs, environment, commute, the way of the future.	Chapter 2 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 3 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences
Michelle Hoglund	I am not only in favor of HST, I would like to invest money in it. Please let me know how to invest. HST Merced to Sacramento would bring life back to the Central Valley, put people back to work, and California back to #1 in the economy.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations.
Donald Hughes	California needs jobs. Please start as soon as possible.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
Ronald Insck	Let's get going on it.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
Adam Jautaikis	This project would be a wonderful addition to the Central Valley and our economy. The reduction of traffic and pollution would help a great deal.	3.2 Transportation; 3.3 Air Quality; 3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
CK Mard John	All Aboard	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives
Walter Kersenbrock	Get started on making some decisions right away. We can build this project better than any other country.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 5 Project Costs and Operations
Bill Kerby	With the stadium issue in Sacramento, need to include "with" and "without" impact studies and extend the radius to at least 5 miles (8.0 kilometers [km]) around the city core around the station site to make sure that rail is designed with flow of traffic and parking capacity. *(Verbal Comments – Sacramento Scoping Meeting)*	3.2 Transportation
Richard Langtry	I am in favor of HST.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives
Victor Lee	We need to have this HST for Central Valley. This will help job growth and the economy for most cities of the Central Valley. Most modern foreign countries have been using HST for decades.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice;
Tim Litton	We need this to be built fast. We have over 40,000 members [Carpenter's Union] who are more than qualified to build this project. We believe this project is revolutionary and our members would love to be a part of it.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
Mark Looker	Very supportive of this proposal. High-speed rail will be a great benefit in reducing cars and significant improvement in air quality.	3.2 Transportation; 3.3 Air Quality
	Project deserves to be fully funded and built quickly.	Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Joseph Lopez	I am against HST through Merced. Cost of living is high enough already for people on fixed incomes and the cost of living would increase more with people who work in other cities moving to Merced and commuting to work. I fear that I won't be able to afford to live in the town I was born in. The cost of rent has gone up since the UC campus was built.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice
David Melilli	I would like to attend more regional meetings to represent the City of Riverbank as part of the regional high-speed rail committee appointed by the City of Riverbank. Please contact me to let me know when other meetings will be held. (Director of Public Works)	Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement; forwarded request and contact information to AECOM staff
Maryalice Myers	This is crazy. We must get our house in order before we start any new boondoggle.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives
Richard Nardinelli	We live in a home adjacent to the UPRR rail line [Sacramento]. This set of tracks is atop a 28-foot levee. Will the train use these tracks?	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.6 Public Utilities and Energy
	Safety concerns.	3.11 Safety and Security
	Noise concerns.	3.4 Noise and Vibration
	Would construction encroach on our property?	3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
Bill Nichols	Challenges of a Downtown Modesto station – visual impact on downtown with an elevated section.	3.16 Aesthetics and Visual Quality
Judy Payne	HST is a waste of taxpayer money. I can drive from Turlock to Orange County in 4 hours and 15 minutes. The amount it will take to build HST is not worth the time or money.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives
George Pettygrove	Excellent source of where we are to date. Food for us non-techie laymen.	Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Joan Porter	The best choice for high-speed rail would be through the agriculture land, not city/urban areas, because it would cause too much disruption to business and the amount of agricultural land is minimal.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice; 3.14 Agricultural Land
Barbara Price	I am for the high-speed rail plan.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives
Mahesh Ranchhod	A project like this has a lot of benefits in terms of employment, economic activity, but having looked at what happened with a lot of such major investments, I'm very concerned about whether or not what we are embarking on will be useful and will be used by the public to the extent that projections envisage. My concern is whether or not this is going to be cost effective and a useful means of transportation. There is so little public transport available and I see very few people using it. If you compare the cost of air travel, it's very close, because of the time. Those who cannot afford air travel would want a much lower pricing, and from what I've seen the pricing is going to be such that it's going to be very close to air travel. For that reason, I do not see this becoming a mass transit system for the general public. Therefore the projections I have seen on the number of passengers are highly optimistic and we may end up like the English Channel tunnel which is bankrupt and a white elephant. If we move away from just looking at the economic benefits and employment during construction, I think it may turn out to be something that becomes a big burden on the state. *(Verbal Comments -- Stockton Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; 3.2 Transportation; 3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
William Rossi, Jr.	Try to preserve agricultural land in the valley.	3.14 Agricultural Land
Holly Samuelson	This is a waste of money for the Valley to add to the co-generation plants that sit deserted. Loss of precious land and money to something that will not be used to a capacity to substantiate the cost. This is the ridiculous idea of "city people" and will not be of use to the majority of the state's population.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
Raul Sanchez	Concern regarding water needed to supply electricity whether for cooling or use of steam turbines. California law requires that developments or projects identify a source for the water that they are going to use. *(Verbal Comments -- Stockton Scoping Meeting)*	3.6 Public Utilities and Energy
John Stott	All my questions about right-of-way, stations, and relation to existing rail lines were answered fully and intelligently.	Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Sue Teranishi	I strongly support getting high-speed rail built and operating soon. There is strong public support for this project.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
Kelly Thompson	We are spending faster than we are bringing in. There are so many important programs being cut like our schools. We should be investing in the future of our children before we start talking about how to get somewhere fast and conveniently.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
Laura Vernon	This project will improve the environment, cleaning up the air we breathe and perhaps putting a halt to global warming.	3.3 Air Quality
	Also a chance to see parts of California we've never seen before.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice
	I'm very concerned about the animals. Please give their survival top consideration.	3.7 Biological Resources and Wetlands
Warp255@yahoo.com	HST is scheduled to run through the most expensive real estate of San Francisco and Los Angles. I think HST from Sacramento to Merced to Fresno is the best bang for the buck that will spur new commercial and residential development along the route.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
Glen Wild	Who would provide electricity for the trains?	3.6 Public Utilities and Energy

TOPIC 1: PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Commenter	Protection of the Environment – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Cost concerns regarding acquiring property, build most over existing buildings?	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
Roll-out map comments	Cemetery indicated north of the town of Hughson just south of river and east of the BNSF.	3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice
	Add in the proposed Atwater-Merced Expressway as a cross over.	3.2 Transportation

TOPIC 2: ALIGNMENT, STATION, AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY ALTERNATIVES

Commenter	Alignment and Station Alternatives – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
STATE AGENCIES		
University of California Merced, Janet Young	I am commenting on behalf of the University of California Merced. Suggest additional alternative with southern end on the BNSF tracks at Castle Airport just north of Atwater that then transitions over to UPRR at some point south of Modesto and continues north on UPRR to Sacramento. This alternative would serve the downtowns of Sacramento, Stockton, and Modesto and also connect to Castle Airport, which was shown in existing studies as northern terminus for Merced to Fresno. Several areas of open land where a connection can be made and there's time to consider an improved route. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives
REGIONAL AGENCIES		
Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District, Paul Philley, Assistant Air Quality Planner/Analyst	The Capitol Corridor serving the San Francisco Bay Area and Sacramento Region is the third busiest Amtrak corridor in the nation with 1,599,625 riders in 2009. Due to a growing economic relationship between the Bay Area and Sacramento Area, travel along the I-80 corridor is expected to increase. Demand in the future may necessitate a high-speed rail line directly between the two regions. Include an alternative design for the Sacramento station that allows for a future extension toward the San Francisco Bay Area.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives

TOPIC 2: ALIGNMENT, STATION, AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY ALTERNATIVES

Commenter	Alignment and Station Alternatives – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, Stacey Mortensen, Executive Director	Utilize the alignment generally adjacent to the UPRR Fresno Subdivision through the Downtowns of the cities along the SR-99 highway corridor.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
	Avoid the Eastern BNSF and CCT alignments/station options that run through predominantly rural areas.	
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
City of Elk Grove, Tiffani Fink, Transit System Manager	The City's preference on the proposed alignments for the high-speed rail is UPRR tracks through the City of Elk Grove.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
City of Escalon, John Abrew, City Engineer/Development Services Director	The City of Escalon opposes the BNSF alignment as it will have very significant negative impacts on the city. *(Verbal Comments -- Stockton Scoping Meeting and written comment)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives; Chapter 3 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences
City of Merced, Bill Cahill, Assistant Deputy City Manager	Suggest additional alternative with southern end on the BNSF tracks at Castle Airport just north of Atwater that then transitions over to UPRR at some point south of Modesto and continues north on UPRR to Sacramento. This alternative would serve the downtowns of Sacramento, Stockton, and Modesto and also connect to Castle Airport. The alternative shown links BNSF and UPRR between Modesto and Stockton, but seems more logical to make the connection south of Modesto to serve Downtown Modesto, and it is also shorter. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives
City of Merced, John Carlisle, City Council	After heavy maintenance facility at Castle, transition from the area of BNSF to UPRR between Castle and Modesto. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives
City of Modesto, Jim Ridenour, Mayor	City of Modesto strongly supports a high-speed rail station in Downtown Modesto. An informational brochure highlighting why Downtown Modesto is preferred for a high-speed rail station is enclosed.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
	The study should consider whether elevating the UPRR alignment would be needed or beneficial.	
City of Riverbank, Rich Holmer, City Manager	The City of Riverbank has a former cannery site of 27 acres (10.9 hectares) (that would make an excellent intermodal transportation area to include the high-speed rail, stopping in Riverbank instead of Modesto. We're excited about the opportunity and would like the environmental report to include Riverbank. *(Verbal Comments – Modesto Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives

TOPIC 2: ALIGNMENT, STATION, AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY ALTERNATIVES

Commenter	Alignment and Station Alternatives – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
City of Riverbank, J.D. Hightower, Community Development Director	The City of Riverbank believes the best location for a high-speed rail station in Stanislaus County along the BNSF tracks is the former Sun Garden-Gangi tomato processing plant. This location is the ideal place for future TOD development - a 27-acre (10.9-hectares) site in the middle of Riverbank. The Downtown Specific Plan places a heavy emphasis on form-based high-density/intensity walkable and livable mixed use development. Riverbank sees a high-speed rail station as a catalyst for the adaptive reuse of this vacant brown field site in the heart of Riverbank consistent with the city's adopted vision statement and general plan. The City Council passed a resolution expressing Riverbank's desire to be included as an alternative site for analysis in the Draft EIR, as well as finding a station consistent with our vision statement and general plan. The guiding principles of the Downtown Specific Plan are a perfect fit for development expected around a high-speed rail station, including recognizing the city's historic roots in agriculture, the railroad, and the river; the heart of the community, innovative urban design programs and land use and economic development strategies, attractive place for businesses, promotion of increased transit ridership within the City, coordinating with rail transportation operators to ensure safe and reliable rail transportation, and coordinating with transit providers and the County to plan for a multi-modal transportation system that supports and encourages alternatives to automobile travel.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives
	The City will begin the DEIR for the specific plan and there is a finite window to place a high-speed rail station as a condition use in the regulating code. We believe that a high-speed rail station at the former plant is superior to the present Amtrak station because it is in an established downtown and is well located to serve not only Modesto but the communities of Oakdale, Ripon, and Escalon. We respectfully request that the discussion of the merits of the Sun Garden-Gangi plant for a high-speed rail station be included as part of the EIR.	

TOPIC 2: ALIGNMENT, STATION, AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY ALTERNATIVES

Commenter	Alignment and Station Alternatives – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
City of Riverbank Downtown Revitalization Committee, Dennis Zinner, Chair	Lists reasons for locating the high-speed rail station in Riverbank on the BNSF route: • Increase use of the HST System by residents of both the west side of the valley but also the eastern foothills. It will also be easier to access by those from the Manteca/Ripon/Escalon areas of south San Joaquin County. And communities of Oakdale, Hughson, Ceres, Turlock, Waterford, and La Grange in Stanislaus County. • Easy access due to the pending construction of the nearby North County Corridor. • Stanislaus County START bus travels within a block of the proposed HST station site and the Riverbank Oakdale Transit Authority dial-a-ride system can easily arrive and depart from this site in Riverbank. • The proposed route through downtown Modesto is only accessible by traveling through metro Modesto, adding to the peak period gridlock there, whereas the proposed site on the east side of Modesto, would only foster leapfrog development since the location is detached from Modesto proper. • Only a few blocks of Riverbank would need to be displaced compared to the need to demolish more blocks in Downtown Modesto, resulting in reduced right-of-way costs.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives
City of Turlock, Debra Whitmore, Deputy Director of Development Services/ Planning	The City of Turlock strongly urges the Authority to continue its discussions and negotiations with the UPRR. The City understands that there are substantial reasons not to locate the HST in this right-of-way, including major utility lines and future expansion of freight railroad capacity. However, the potential impacts on the City of Turlock and other communities should be considered in weighing the options. Joint use of the right-of-way, utilizing a cantilever system to suspend the tracks above the freight line, would have far less impact on properties, businesses, aesthetics, and public safety.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
	The Authority should evaluate an alternative using the Golden State Boulevard median north of the Fulkerth/Hawkeye and south of the Golden State Boulevard overpass of the UPRR. Unfortunately, Golden State Boulevard veers away from the UPRR through the middle of Turlock. This would not provide the HST with an exclusive right-of-way, but would minimize potential impacts on private property.	
	The Authority should consider, in addition to the BNSF alternative, an alternative to the west of Washington Road, entirely bypassing the City of Turlock city limit.	
ORGANIZATIONS, ASSOCIATIONS, AND BUSINESSES		
Californians for High-Speed Rail, Brian	The determination of ideal station locations should be given high priority, with alignments designed to access these sites.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project

TOPIC 2: ALIGNMENT, STATION, AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY ALTERNATIVES

Commenter	Alignment and Station Alternatives – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Stanke, Executive Director and Daniel Krause, Board of Directors Vice Chair	Specific criteria for locating stations: • Potential for TOD: strong commitments to significant amounts of TOD within a half-mile (0.81-kilometer [km]) radius of the station site, growth management policies of locality have teeth and designed to efficiently direct growth into the half-mile (0.81-kilometer [km]) radius of HST stations • Ability of HST riders to walk to large volumes of urban development and major destinations: square feet of development and types of land uses within 12-minute walk and prioritize locations near land uses that stimulate high ridership (office, residential, and large cultural and commercial); transportation strategies that focus on TDM measures that reduce auto trips. • Convenient and seamless connections to existing and planned transit services: where most transit services converge; a goal of one transfer from HST to another form of transit to a large percentage of prominent destinations in a given city	Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use;
	Stockton station: the Robert J. Cabral Station in Downtown Stockton should be the only station location carried forward for Stockton. ACE already uses this station and it provides the best access to Downtown Stockton. The Stockton station will serve as a critical transfer station for HST riders from the Central Valley to transfer to ACE serving East Bay destinations. It is compatible with TOD and close enough to Downtown Stockton to encourage its redevelopment and revitalization. Any alignment that does not go to Robert J Cabral Station should be dropped.	
	Modesto station: the Briggsmore Amtrak station east of Modesto should be dropped from further consideration due to land use incompatibilities.	
	Californians for High-Speed Rail support the selection of the Sacramento Rail-yards Station as the only station option for HST services.	
	Regional Rail Stations: examine the feasibility of locating four track stations where regional ACE services could stop while HST trains would continue through. Both single-level and stacked station should be looked at. When evaluating regional rail station design, UPRR should be consulted regarding the possibility of using their right-of-way for the tracks and station platforms of a regional rail service.	

TOPIC 2: ALIGNMENT, STATION, AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY ALTERNATIVES

Commenter	Alignment and Station Alternatives – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Californians for High-Speed Rail support the examination of potential regional rail stations at the following locations: • Sacramento State University near the intersection of College Town Drive and Sinclair Road near the Q Street and 65th Street light rail station • Elk Grove, downtown near the intersection of the UPRR right-of-way and Elk Grove Blvd. • Downtown Galt, near the intersection of the UPRR right-of-way and C Street • Downtown Lodi at the Lodi Transit Center • Downtown Manteca near the intersection of Yosemite Avenue and the UPRR line. A secondary less favorable location could be near the intersection of S Main St and the UPRR line. • All of the above potential station locations would provide opportunities for both local and regional transit ridership and TOD, and would help renew existing city centers or urban neighborhoods and strengthen the Regional Council of Governments' smart growth objectives.	
Central Valley Rails to Trails Foundation (CVRTF), Elizabeth Mahan, President	CVRTF would like the CCT alternative removed from consideration. Has been laying groundwork to purchase and convert a 27-mile (43.5-kilometer [km]) section of the CCT for use as a trail that would link Sacramento with San Joaquin County. After research by the SACOG, it was determined that this portion of the CCT was best suited for non motorized use, and CCT was added to t he SACOG Blueprint and the Sacramento County General Plan as a potential recreation route.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
	CVRTF led discussions with UPRR regarding the purchase of the CCT, which was open to selling their portion of the CCT until last year, partially due to the potential increase in value to sell it for HST.	
Golden Valley Neighborhood Associates, John Knox,	What we would like to see is the track for the trains beyond BNSF through Castle Air Force Base transition onto the UPRR track sometime after that. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives
	We are located in the area where the secondary facility would be [maintenance] and we are very much in favor of that, but our first choice is Castle Air Force Base. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	
Greater Merced High-Speed Rail Committee, Lee Boese, Co-Chair	Suggest additional alternative with southern end on the BNSF tracks at Castle Airport just north of Atwater and then transitions over to UPRR at some point south of Modesto and continues north on UPRR to Sacramento. This alternative would serve the downtowns of Sacramento, Stockton, and Modesto and also connect to Castle Airport, which was shown in existing studies as northern terminus for Merced to Fresno. Several areas of open land where a connection can be made and there's time to consider an improved route. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives

TOPIC 2: ALIGNMENT, STATION, AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY ALTERNATIVES

Commenter	Alignment and Station Alternatives – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Lodi Chamber of Commerce, Pat Patrick	The City of Lodi would like to see the HST come down the UPRR south of Sacramento and run through downtown Lodi using the UPRR corridor, because we like the option of the commuter rail through the San Joaquin rail commission utilizing those tracks when HST would not be coming through. *(Verbal Comments -- Stockton Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives
	Use UPRR line south from Sacramento to Stockton through Downtown Lodi incorporating ACE commuter rail when tracks available or trains to Stockton Sacramento (?) in and out of Lodi. (draw your own map)	
Riverbank Chamber of Commerce, John Cox, Vice President	I am representing the chamber and we would like the Authority to consider Riverbank as a stopping place to pick up and drop off passengers for the betterment of our town. The old cannery would be perfect, because there are retail services there, and the idea is to develop it as a retail-restaurant site. Parking is available. *(Verbal Comments – Modesto Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Union Pacific, Jerry Wilmoth, General Manager Network Infrastructure	UPRR understands that the Authority is considering UPRR's Fresno Subdivision for the HST alignment between Sacramento and Merced. It is not in UPRR's interests to permit any proposed HST alignment on our rights-of-way. Only UPRR has the right to permit other railroads or rail operators use of any part of this right-of-way. For the majority of its length between Merced and Sacramento, the Fresno Subdivision right-of-way is 100 feet (30.2 meters) wide, with limited wider zones in towns and cities for station grounds. All remaining right-of-way is dedicated to current and future freight rail service and cannot be released for HST construction.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use;
	UPRR has a federal obligation to service existing shippers and new shippers who request service in the future.	
	Placing the HST alignment at ground level adjacent to or near UPRR right-of-way in areas where no shippers now operate would, in effect, create a rail "desert" that could never in the future be used to site a new, rail-served facility for any shipper. This is especially critical between Manteca and Merced, where SR 99 has cut off one side of UPRR access to potential industrial shippers. HST on the other side would prevent future rail-served uses and future industries in this corridor would have to be served by trucks using local roads rather than rail.	

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Commenter	Alignment and Station Alternatives – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Even where SR 99 is not adjacent to our tracks, the Authority must consider that an immediately adjacent HST alignment would curtail economic development along that side of the corridor and deprive UPRR, potential shippers, landowners, and cities and counties of valuable commercial opportunities. The Authority must evaluate the economic loss and environmental impacts and develop mitigation alternatives to limit impacts by retaining the possibility for future rail-related development along the Fresno Subdivision. UPRR strongly urges the Authority to site the HST far enough from UPRR to permit future industrial development between the railroad and HST without the need for grade-separated roadway and rail access. Alternatively, HST could be placed on the opposite side of SR 99 from UPRR between Manteca and Merced.	
	UPRR owns and operates a major railcar freight yard which is crucial to serve customers on the Fresno Subdivision and on the main line over Altamont Pass. It also serves as a consolidation point for freight shipments to and from branch lines, regional carriers, and short line railroads. At Lathrop, UPRR owns and operates a major intermodal terminal on the parallel Sacramento Subdivision serving the Central Valley and portions of the Bay Area. These facilities are crucial to the future economic development of the entire area and cannot be constrained by the HST alignment. These facilities and all adjacent expansion property must be reserved for present and future railroad service.	
	UPRR's Martinez Subdivision right-of-way connects Elvas and the Sacramento Valley Station 3 miles (4.8 kilometers [km]) to the west. It also connects to the Sacramento Subdivision at Haggin, at the middle of this segment. UPRR, BNSF, and Caltrans use the Martinez Subdivision as the principle freight and passenger route through the Central Corridor between the Midwest and the Bay Area. There is a major project at the Sacramento Valley Station to realign UPRR's tracks and relocate the current passenger platforms and related facilities. Any HST use of UPRR's Martinez Subdivision right-of-way at grade or aerially would unduly constrain UPRR's service, as well as limit expansion opportunities in this highly constrained area. UPRR cannot make any part of the Martinez Subdivision available for the HST, including the aerial portion over the Sacramento Valley Station.	
	The NOP map did not identify UPRR's Sacramento Subdivision between Stockton and Sacramento as a potential alternative for HST. The May 13, 2008, letter to Mehdi Morshed would be equally applicable to the Sacramento Subdivision.	

TOPIC 2: ALIGNMENT, STATION, AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY ALTERNATIVES

Commenter	Alignment and Station Alternatives – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	UPRR, however, is willing to enter into discussions with the Authority for the joint use of a portion of UPRR's Sacramento Subdivision extending between Stockton (El Pinal) and the vicinity of the former W.P. Curtis Park Railyard for higher speed operations not exceeding 110 mph (177 km/h). Sacramento RT has a passenger station at the terminus of its Blue Line at Meadowview Station where HST passengers could perform a cross-platform transfer between HST and Sacramento RT to access the extensive Sacramento RT light rail network in the greater Sacramento region.	
	UPRR is willing to meet with the Authority to discuss its concerns about HST operation and better understand the Authority's intentions regarding UPRR's right of way. Following such meeting, UPRR will be glad to consider all future requests by the Authority for information concerning operations, construction standards and mapping data.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement
INDIVIDUALS / PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS		
Robin Adam	I am from Merced and I support the UPRR rail system 99 alignment from Merced, Turlock, Modesto, and Stockton so it will go through downtown. *(Verbal Comments – Modesto Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Brad Barker	Modesto stop should be downtown, not on the edge of town. High-speed rail is convenient because it takes you to the center of towns where you need to go, unlike airports that are 15 (24 kilometers [km]) to 20 (32.2 kilometers [km]) miles out.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation
Bob Barzan	I would like to see the Modesto station in Downtown Modesto regardless of the route the tracks take north or south, even if the rail follows the BNSF. The Downtown Modesto station will serve a much greater number of people because they will have access to existing infrastructure, it will be a stimulus to positive redevelopment of inner city Modesto (ranked least livable city in the country), and it is the geographic center of the county and most convenient for population to reach.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
	I would like to see the station serve both the HST and the commuter trains to the Bay Area.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation
	If the train must follow the BNSF, it would be easy to do that south of Modesto and still have the station downtown. From Merced the tracks can go to Empire, then west to downtown following the tracks between Empire and Downtown Modesto. I think that was the route of the Empire Traction Company. Then north of Modesto, it can follow the route of the UPRR. I did not see that as an option in your pamphlet.	Chapter 2 Alternatives

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Commenter	Alignment and Station Alternatives – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Alfred Bulf (draw your own map)	Indicated use of Sacramento Southern Railroad west of I-5 on map.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives
Renee Bulf	I am against compartmentalizing different corridors as separately managed entities, because there are many antagonists who are against the high-speed rail, and those in favor need to remain unified otherwise antagonists will be able to divide and conquer different corridors. *(Verbal Comments – Sacramento Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Stan Chance	Can the high-speed rail be placed along I-5 corridor where easements will be cheaper, less prime farm ground consumed, and communities can be better designed around transit?	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; 3.14 Agriculture; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
Vito Chiesa, Stanislaus County Board of Supervisors	No preference as county supervisor, but personally would like to see a stop in Modesto, a downtown stop is more important, assuming the impact on the surrounding communities aren't too great. *(Verbal Comments – Modesto Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives
James Clarke	Support high-speed rail station in Downtown Modesto in order to maximize existing growth patterns and incentivize development along existing population corridors. *(Verbal Comments – Modesto Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Alan Claunch	Does the high-speed rail utilize the BNSF easement and right-of-way along its entire course?	Chapter 2 Alternatives
	Will the tracks be elevated or at grade level?	Chapter 2 Alternatives
David Crain	Support Southern Pacific corridor, because it would be a greater resource for the population of the Highway 99 area serving Merced to Sacramento. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives

TOPIC 2: ALIGNMENT, STATION, AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY ALTERNATIVES

Commenter	Alignment and Station Alternatives – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Keith Ensminger	I would like to see an alignment along the Highway 65 corridor where Caltrans has plans for a highway up the east side of the San Joaquin Valley. This makes sense, because avoids right-of-way purchase in urban centers like Fresno, Modesto, Stockton up to Sacramento; would be cheaper to build; support trend of population growth toward east in the valley; spurs could be developed to get people from the urban areas to the train, which would be 10 to 15 miles (16.1 to 24.1 kilometers [km]) to the east. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Trudy Fassler	In favor of the proposed route along Hwy 99 and UPRR. This corridor is already more industrial, and the center of Modesto and other major cities are along this rail, which are more likely to bring commerce to the cities along the line.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
David Froba	I support having the train station downtown [Modesto] to encourage public transportation. *(Verbal Comments – Modesto Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Louise Gardner	Will the cities design the rail station or the Authority?	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use; Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement
Daniel Geer	I fully support the HST System for the Central Valley and would like to see a downtown station in Modesto. Ridership is critical for the success of this venture and the population density in Modesto would help make that success possible.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
Ti Gonzalez	The BNSF corridor would be the best route for HST.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Suzanne Guthrie	I would vote for the train to follow the BNSF route to the east of Modesto where Amtrak is. The old Southern Pacific route ties up traffic and would cost more.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation; Chapter 7 Cost

TOPIC 2: ALIGNMENT, STATION, AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY ALTERNATIVES

Commenter	Alignment and Station Alternatives – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Evelyn Halbert	Concerns regarding the possibility of locating a station in Riverbank.	Chapter 2 Alternatives.
	Modesto has the largest population in the county and more infrastructure in place. It has a bus depot downtown near the tracks and is close to SR 99 and the airport.	
	There is also rail on the west side of the county along Highway 53 – has this been looked at?	
Hubert Hanrahan	I like the alignment through Downtown Stockton and Downtown Lodi over the CCT alignment. It's been a great program and I'm optimistic about its future. *(Verbal Comments -- Stockton Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Roland and Doris Heard	For better ridership the route closer to Hwy 99 would be best.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation
A. Hegler	Sacramento to Stockton – 99 route best – more direct.	Chapter 2 Alternative
J.D. Hightower	City of Riverbank has a 27-acre (10.9-hectares) former cannery site right along the BNSF that lends itself perfectly for high-speed rail station in terms of opportunities for TOD, compact roads, and a model for high-speed rail stations. We have recently improved downtown. We urge the Authority to consider the Riverbank site as an alternative to the Amtrak station. *(Verbal Comments – Modesto Scoping Meeting)* Sun-Garden Gangi, former tomato processing plant, is in the middle of Riverbank. All planning documents and policies support the concept of our downtown being the center of local and regional mass transit.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Rich Holmer	I would like the Authority to consider Riverbank on the BNSF line as the stop for the rail. It has 20 acres (8.1 hectares) at former cannery site available for an intermodal transit center. Riverbank has always been the rail city in Stanislaus County and would be an ideal fit.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Denny Jackman	Downtown stations promote better land-use and contribute to revitalization efforts. Downtown Modesto is the business, arts, and entertainment center of Stanislaus County and region. It has the city and county offices and is the transportation hub for local transit. Far superior to BNSF corridor. All the elements needed to make the high-speed rail gain transit riders are in the city core.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
Lois Jimenez	From the Castle Air Force Base maintenance yard on the BNSF, trains could leave on the Santa Fe, travel north to a point south of Modesto where a spur line would join the UPRR alignment.	Chapter 2 Alternatives

TOPIC 2: ALIGNMENT, STATION, AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY ALTERNATIVES

Commenter	Alignment and Station Alternatives – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Garrad Marsh	The high-speed rail in France is being built much, much cheaper than we're doing by bypassing all the central core cities. Idea is to build high-speed rail out of downtowns to the west side from Modesto to Bakersfield at least, and have a transfer station that is not open to the public where people would get off and take a medium speed, 60 mph (96.6 km/h) or so train to the center core where the station would be. It seems feasible and less costly. *(Verbal Comments – Modesto Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives
	I think it is extremely important that high-speed rail nail down its alignment quickly and that alignment should be central Modesto which best serves the citizens of not just Modesto but also the 2nd (Turlock) and 3rd (Ceres) largest cities in Stanislaus County.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
John Mensinger	Downtown Modesto is the best choice for the HST station and Altamont express train. Ideal location is to the east of 8th Street between I and L streets. It is central location for Stanislaus County, has excellent road and public transit connections, many existing parking garages and lots near station within a few blocks of many attractions, good access by bicycle from residential areas (Virginia Corridor Trail and Peggy Mensinger Trail).	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
	Location east of 8th Street between I and L streets: 8th Street west of the UPRR, 8th Street is unimportant and little used, buildings on the west side of 8th are older and of low value. There might be redevelopment money to aid in this process, adjacent to Transit Center, next to parking garage, less than 3 blocks from 6th Street with access to SR 99, adjacent to L St (SR 132)	
Terry Meyer	The bullet train Modesto stop should be in downtown at the old Union Pacific Station, not at the Amtrak Station. Public transportation should share a common station. "Big Bus," "Big Train," and "Big taxi" want stations located remotely so passengers are captive or rely on cabs to get to one carrier to another.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation
Mike Murphy	If the UPRR line to Downtown Modesto is chosen, I would like the Authority to research possible routes that would allow Castle Airport to house the maintenance facility.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Mike Nelson	Suggest additional alternative with southern end on the BNSF tracks at Castle Airport just north of Atwater that then transitions over to UPRR at some point south of Modesto and continues north on UPRR to Sacramento. This alternative would serve the downtowns of Sacramento, Stockton, and Modesto and also connect to Castle Airport, which was shown in existing studies as northern terminus for Merced to Fresno. Several areas of open land where a connection can be made and there's time to consider an improved route. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives

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Commenter	Alignment and Station Alternatives – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Bill Nichols	I would like to see a head-to-head comparison of the two alternatives for Modesto station.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; Chapter 3 Affected Environment and Environmental Consequences
	I favor the downtown Modesto station because of lots of off-street parking in Doubletree/MCP Garage and Centre Plaza Garage. Convenient to Highway 99, hub of the bus system, business destination (highest proportion of users will be business people. In France, the TGW doesn't drop people off in the boondocks – transit is center-city.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation
Patrick Patterson	It would be important for ridership and downtown redevelopment to use the downtown rail location [Modesto].	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation; 3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice
Billy Powell	The original routes should be kept.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Alan Richards	In Modesto, the UPRR route is most convenient. The largest hotel in the area and numerous restaurants, businesses, the courthouse, and the civic center are within blocks. The present Amtrak station on the BNSF offers no conveniences for the potential traveler. It is a 1.5- to 2-mile (2.4- to 3.2-kilometer [km]) walk on a high-speed expressway for any restaurants.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.13 Local Growth, Station Planning and Land Use
Bill Spriggs	The route needs to connect the UPRR and the BNSF somewhere between Modesto and Atwater.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Alan Sweeten	The Merced to Sacramento Section of the HST should be built adjacent to the UPRR because it will then mostly parallel SR 99, creating a unified transportation corridor with easy highway access to stations. If HST is to be a viable travel option, stations must be conveniently located in the centers of the cities that they serve and readily accessible via the highways.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
	Following the UPRR tracks makes viable a future Turlock-Modesto station (Keyes or Ceres).	
	The BNSF line would be less convenient for SR 99 and mean more infrastructure costs. A future joint additional station seems less practical. The BNSF route would mean unnecessary disruption as well as infringements on the rural areas neighboring.	

TOPIC 2: ALIGNMENT, STATION, AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY ALTERNATIVES

Commenter	Alignment and Station Alternatives – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Ryan Swehla	It would be a tragedy to put it anywhere but Downtown Modesto. The train is meant as economic development. Putting station in suburban outskirts does not accomplish this.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice
Elaine Trevino, Greater Merced High Speed Rail Committee	My comment is specific to Merced to Modesto stop alignment and what I would like to see on the next scoping session and series of maps would be the proposed cross-over from the UPRR to the BNSF. There is one proposed that has already been provided in past documents that is not in the maps presented today.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
	I would like the proposed Atwater Expressway cross-over, the alternative alignment, added in as well. *(Verbal Comments – Modesto Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Lana Vierra	Downtown Modesto is extremely accessible to the nine cities in Stanislaus County as well as the pedestrian traffic that encompasses the urban area.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation
Ersamo Viveros	I am from Stockton and I am for the UPRR alignment all the way to Stockton. *(Verbal Comments – Modesto Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Judy Walther	The bullet train should stop at the Amtrak station in Modesto since there is no traffic congestion there and plenty of parking.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation
Glen Wild	Route through cities versus rural farmland.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice
Brian Young	Route through Turlock, Modesto, Manteca/Lathrop, Stockton, Lodi, Galt. Stops at Modesto, Manteca, Stockton, and Lodi. (Comment form and draw your own map.)	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Nancy Young	I would like to see it coming out of Castle using the BNSF railroad routes and then connect somewhere south of Modesto. It looks like a much more reasonable route. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Roll-out map comments	Tidewater Southern/UPRR right-of-way downtown to BNSF? (Suggesting connecting Downtown Modesto to BNSF along east-west rail to Empire roughly along Yosemite Avenue?)	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives
	More overlap with ACE Modesto Extension – lower cost (indicated north of downtown Modesto)	Chapter 2 Alternatives

TOPIC 2: ALIGNMENT, STATION, AND MAINTENANCE FACILITY ALTERNATIVES

Commenter	Alignment and Station Alternatives – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
	Line drawn along UPRR through Lodi, with transition from UPRR to CCT crossed out	Chapter 2 Alternatives
	Can existing line through Lodi be mirrored – less turns and development over farmland	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.12 Socioeconomics, Community and Environmental Justice; 3.14 Agricultural Land; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
	Note at Modesto Amtrak station location – "this is not an investment"; note at Downtown Modesto station location – "this is an investment."	Chapter 2 Alternatives
	Note on map margin – Downtown Modesto station is best for central location to serve businesses/ professionals/commuters as most businesses are nearer to downtown core than the Amtrak station. Drive from Amtrak to central Modesto is 30-45 minutes at best – very inconvenient.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation
	Alternative station site circled at Riverbank on the west side of BNSF south of the river.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
	Alternative Stockton station site circled east of the city on the BNSF south of Highway 26.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
	Note on BNSF corridor east of Stockton: fails to include a viable Stockton station	Chapter 2 Alternatives

TOPIC 3: CONNECTIVITY AND COORDINATION WITH/IMPACTS TO OTHER TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

Commenter	Connectivity and Coordination with/Impacts to Other Transportation Facilities – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
City of Modesto, Jim Ridenour, Mayor	High-speed rail integrates well with the future ACE Altamont Corridor regional rail service.	3.2 Transportation
	Modesto is the transit hub for Stanislaus County. All of the transit services provide connections into Downtown Modesto at the downtown transit center.	

TOPIC 3: CONNECTIVITY AND COORDINATION WITH/IMPACTS TO OTHER TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

Commenter	Connectivity and Coordination with/Impacts to Other Transportation Facilities – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
City of Turlock, Debra Whitmore, Deputy Director of Development Services/ Planning	The regional rail study identified Turlock as a potential station for commuter rail service. The City requests that this issue be investigated as part of the HST EIR/EIS to ensure that commuter rail service will not be precluded or eliminated by the HST project.	3.2 Transportation
REGIONAL AGENCIES		
San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, Stacey Mortensen, Executive Director	Incorporate the planning and environmental work for the regional overlay service to optimize the corridor use and determine appropriate phasing and cost sharing strategies.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
ORGANIZATIONS, ASSOCIATIONS, & BUSINESSES		
Californians for High Speed Rail, Brian Stanke, Executive Director and Daniel Krause, Board of Directors Vice Chair	Fully supports joint planning with ACE and local communities to identify and evaluate potential station locations for commuter and regional rail overlay services. The Merced to Sacramento HST section will always have lower train frequency than the Merced to Los Angeles main line, as San Francisco Bay Area service will split off near Chowchilla. It is in the public interest and financial benefit to the Authority to plan for and allow regional services to use this excess capacity to provide additional passenger services. The Merced to Sacramento Project EIR/EIS should thoroughly evaluate the potential regional stations and design alignments in such a way as to allow the construction of such stations at the time of high-speed rail construction or at a later date.	
Central Valley Rails to Trails Foundation, Elizabeth Mahan, President	Residents in Sacramento and San Joaquin counties have been working hard toward the goal of a safe route for non motorized transportation. There is no other north-south trail and without the CCT, there are no other options.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation

TOPIC 3: CONNECTIVITY AND COORDINATION WITH/IMPACTS TO OTHER TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

Commenter	Connectivity and Coordination with/Impacts to Other Transportation Facilities – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Law Offices of Stuart M. Flashman on behalf of California Rail Foundation and Transportation Solutions Defense and Education Fund, Stuart Flashman	EIR/EIS should address how this proposed of HST System will tie into and connect with other segments of the HST system, the proposed Altamont Corridor regional rail system, and the existing Altamont Commuter Express conventional rail system.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation
Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates, Walt Seifert, Executive Director	Recommends the EIR/EIS evaluate bicycle circulation impacts caused by the project on bicyclists who need to cross the rail corridor.	3.2 Transportation
INDIVIDUALS / PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS		
Mike Barnbaum	There needs to be formal presentations before a variety of committees and boards on this and not just open houses. I would ask that the SACOG, the Sacramento Regional Transit District and the SJRRC have this matter continuously on their agendas. Contact information provided.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation; Chapter 7 Public and Agency Involvement
Alfred Bulf	High-speed rail needs planners to have a broader view of transportation service and markets. Compartmentalization is detrimental. Thinking about making the HST nothing more than a competitor to commuter airline flights endangers the entire project.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; 3.2 Transportation
Renee Bulf	High-speed rail must be designed, planned, and managed in a manner integrated with all modes of transportation. Conceiving it as a replacement for commuter airline flights is a recipe for failure. High-speed rail needs to form the backbone of a complete transportation system that doesn't threaten airlines, hence invoking their lobbyists to derail high-speed rail.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; 3.2 Transportation
	Do not compartmentalize high-speed rail, allowing it to be divided and conquered.	
James Clarke	A station in Downtown Modesto will be more amenable to connecting to existing transportation that works, like bus in the adjacent transportation center on 9th Street. *(Verbal Comments – Modesto Scoping Meeting)*	3.2 Transportation

TOPIC 3: CONNECTIVITY AND COORDINATION WITH/IMPACTS TO OTHER TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES

Commenter	Connectivity and Coordination with/Impacts to Other Transportation Facilities – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Brad Christian	Downtown Modesto is the best location for the station. A multimodal transit center downtown would provide great connections to rail, intra- and intercity buses, and interregional buses.	3.2 Transportation
Alan Claunch	How will Amtrak be affected by high-speed rail?	3.2 Transportation
Suzanne Guthrie	Mesh with existing airports and transit systems, not wander away. I would enjoy not having to take the bus across to Los Angeles from Bakersfield and would appreciate connections with airports.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; 3.2 Transportation
Gunnar Henrioulle	Motor fuel ration scenario presents challenges to construction of new transport features – we must have well-delineated rail projects for passenger and freight capacity expansion reached before crisis.	
Bill Kerby	Consider sharing of rail between freight and high-speed rail to reduce costs and increase acceptance by the people who live there. We would need higher than 18 feet (5.5 meters) clearance if freight trains were to use the same tracks due to double stacked containers. Future improvements may result in electrified freight rather than diesel, and high-speed rail equipment should be designed so that it can run on conventional future electrified lines. *(Verbal Comments – Sacramento Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation
Terry Meyer	The bullet train station should be very near the present bus terminal conveniently located in the heart of Downtown Modesto.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; 3.2 Transportation
Bill Nichols	Challenge of the Downtown Modesto alternative is the ease of transition of users to regional transit. Millbrae Caltrain/BART, PKG certainly is one example of local rail interchange.	3.2 Transportation
William Rossi, Jr.	Try to work with railroads already in place.	3.2 Transportation
Brian Young	I would also like to see higher speed rail to the Altamont Commuter Express line, which would tie into the East Bay with Sacramento via Stockton and vice versa.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; 3.2 Transportation

TOPIC 4: ALTERNATIVE TECHNOLOGIES

Commenter	Alternative Technologies – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
INDIVIDUALS / PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS		
Ti Gonzalez	I believe the first step is to start an intermediate speed train with stops as the HST Project, with trains traveling less than 125 mph (201 km/h). Seriously consider the diesel idea.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives
Kevin Stankiewicz	The Merced to Sacramento HST Project EIR/EIS should study a design that is compatible with an electrified local commuter rail system sharing tracks with the HST running between Downtown Sacramento to Downtown Modesto to provide a transit alternative to the congested I-5 and SR 99 corridors, like what is being studied on the Peninsula with Caltrain. This is a great opportunity to build the system compatible with a local service at a fraction of the cost of construction of the two systems separately at different times and with less construction disruption to the local area. Local stops for this Caltrain type of local train service to consider for both UPRR and CCT listed.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives

TOPIC 5: PROJECT FUNDING/COST

Commenter	Project Funding/Cost – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
REGIONAL AGENCIES		
San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission, Stacey Mortensen, Executive Director	Consider early corridor acquisition strategies in areas where development may hinder later implementation of the corridor, and where early acquisition could facilitate an incremental start of new rail service.	Chapter 2 Alternatives; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
City of Elk Grove, Tiffani Fink, Transit System Manager	The development of high-speed rail should not divert existing transportation program funding to be completed.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
City of Lodi, Phil Katzakian, Mayor	The City Council unanimously voted to request that the preferred alignment for the HST utilize the UPRR corridor through the City of Lodi and not to the east. The city council is aware that there will not be a stop in Lodi for the HST, but the Council is hopeful that the alignment through downtown will provide the ability to use the existing multimodal station for regional rail service.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
INDIVIDUALS / PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS		
Renee Bulf	It is very important that transportation planning be looked at in terms of the service and markets, with an eye on long-term revenue. *(Verbal Comments – Sacramento Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
Alan Claunch	Will the high-speed rail be supported by tax subsidies or is it projected to be profitable without being cost prohibitive for the average commuter?	Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
	Who will be directly accountable for this project?	Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
	At what point does the cost benefit analysis deem the project too expensive to provide a reasonable return on investment?	Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
Trudy Fassler	I would like to know more about the projected cost and timeline for planning, construction, and completion.	Front Matter; Summary; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations

TOPIC 5: PROJECT FUNDING/COST

Commenter	Project Funding/Cost – Comments	Relevant EIR/EIS Section(s)
Louise Gardner	When will office staff and project managers be hired?	Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
	Are any of the cities with stations putting up any money and who shares in the profits?	Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
	Who is counting where the money from the federal government is going? Will there be open access to the financial books?	Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
John-Pierre Mendoza	The more they delay it, the more expensive it gets. Every time I come to these meetings they have a longer, farther-down-the-road date. Before it was testing trains by 2015, now they're saying 2020. They should go to the Assembly and the Senate and the government and get exceptions or waivers to all this nonsense and get it done quickly instead of going through this nonsense for every time we have a different route. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
	Why does it make any logic to delay until San Jose to San Francisco and Los Angeles to Anaheim projects are resolved? We can start much faster in the Central Valley. Accelerate before it is too late. Costs climb exponentially with ever year of delay.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need and Project Objectives; Chapter 2 Alternatives; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
Richard Nardinelli	Will ticket fees be reasonable to ensure good ridership? We have heard fees could equal airfare.	3.2 Transportation; Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
	Will this system support itself and not require federal subsidy and bailout? We are concerned about future taxes.	Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
Bill Nichols	One of the challenges of the Downtown Modesto alternative is cost.	Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations
Laura Vernon	It could be a convenience if it stopped at a city of our choice, but maybe it would be wiser if this project was taken one step at a time and we pay for it as we can afford it.	Chapter 5 Project Cost and Operations

TOPIC 6: ISSUES OUTSIDE SCOPE OF MERCED TO SACRAMENTO STUDY AREA

Commenter	Issues Outside Scope of Merced to Sacramento Study Area – Comments	Notes
LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES		
City of Merced, John Carlisle, City Council	Very important that the heavy maintenance facility be at Castle. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Comment forwarded to Merced to Fresno Project Team
Merced County Board of Supervisors, John Pedrozo, Supervisor and Greater Merced High-Speed Rail Committee	The Merced County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution supporting high-speed rail for California and the A-2 route from Fresno to Merced.	Comment forwarded to Merced to Fresno Project Team
San Joaquin County Community Development Department, Chandler Martin, Deputy Director of Planning	The Altamont Corridor Regional Rail connections appear to go through the new community of Mountain House. Please include a discussion of the possible impacts on that community and consistency with Mountain House plans.	Comment forwarded to Altamont Corridor Project Team
Stanislaus County, Vito Chiesa, Board of Supervisors	Extend Merced to Bakersfield to Atwater and bring the heavy maintenance yard to Castle Air Force base. *(Verbal Comments – Modesto Scoping Meeting)*	Comment forwarded to Merced to Fresno Project Team
ORGANIZATIONS, ASSOCIATIONS, & BUSINESSES		
John Knox, Golden Valley Neighborhood Associates	Very much in favor of the maintenance facility at Castle Air force Base. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Comment forwarded to Merced to Fresno Project Team

TOPIC 6: ISSUES OUTSIDE SCOPE OF MERCED TO SACRAMENTO STUDY AREA

Commenter	Issues Outside Scope of Merced to Sacramento Study Area – Comments	Notes
David Walker, Meadowbrook Water Company	Serve the area between the cities of Merced and Atwater. Interested in the heavy maintenance facility and would very much like to see it built at Castle Commerce Center. There is plenty of housing available, under-capacity sewers can be corrected, plenty of water. It would go near an existing well and close to a site we're considering for a new well, but not concerned about negative impacts. There is a well next to the BNSF, which causes greater vibration than the new high-speed rail would, and it doesn't negatively impact the well site. *(Verbal and written comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Comment forwarded to Merced to Fresno Project Team
INDIVIDUALS / PRIVATE PROPERTY OWNERS		
Anonymous (draw your own map – 1)	Altamont Corridor option if eastern alignment [BNSF] is selected from the south: from BNSF near Escalon northwest along BNSF to Stockton downtown and curving southwest of I-5 to a point north of Lathrop.	Comment forwarded to Altamont Corridor Project Team
Anonymous (draw your own map – 2)	Station desired in Tracy, with first priority along the Altamont Corridor alignment in the center of Tracy and second priority along the Altamont Commuter Express at the south end of Tracy.	Comment forwarded to Altamont Corridor Project Team
Anonymous (draw your own map - 3)	Station desired in Tracy, with first priority along the Altamont Corridor alignment in the center of Tracy and second priority along the Altamont Commuter Express at the south end of Tracy.	Comment forwarded to Altamont Corridor Project Team
Brad Barker	Sacramento, Stockton, and Modesto should not have been left out of the first phase – huge population centers.	Comment forwarded to the Authority.
	The crossover point out of the valley should have been Altamont Pass, not Pacheco Pass, northern cities will not go down to Merced to get to the Bay Area and rail lines should not be built through Henry Coe Park.	Comment forwarded to San Jose to Merced Project Team
Michael Brennan	My goal is for the most direct system serving most citizens in most efficient manner, with few as possible stops between San Francisco and Los Angeles and San Diego regions. For now the stops in the Central Valley should be Fresno, Stockton, and Sacramento. We can put connector mass transportation plans for all in-between population areas later.	Chapter 1 Purpose and Need; Addressed by programmatic EIR/EIS documents
Kenneth R. Brown	I like the route from Merced to San Jose [Pacheco] as it provides shorter time from Sacramento and doesn't change the time from the south too much. A fast commute to the Bay Area from the Valley would make it possible for valley residents to hold better jobs in the city. This route also impacts agricultural land less.	Comment forwarded to San Jose to Merced Project Team
Rod Buchanan	Need a stop in Tracy. Connection with the new transit station or an alternative location in Tracy near the current ACE train stop.	Chapter 2 Alternatives

TOPIC 6: ISSUES OUTSIDE SCOPE OF MERCED TO SACRAMENTO STUDY AREA

Commenter	Issues Outside Scope of Merced to Sacramento Study Area – Comments	Notes
Alfred Bulf	High-speed rail issues on the San Francisco Peninsula impact the entire high-speed train future. A multimodal crossing for San Francisco Bay is the short answer, with an Authority connection to the new Trans-Bay Terminal in San Francisco. The design by Frank Lloyd Wright in 1949 for the second San Francisco Bay Crossing with 21st century architectural engineering enhancements could be developed into a multimodal high-capacity transportation facility. With estimates for the underwater tube construction increasing, the Second San Francisco Multimodal Bay Crossing offers savings. Also suggest an energy distribution grid be incorporated into the high-speed rail line.	Comment forwarded to PMT.
Al Bulf	The tunnel from the Tehachapis through the Central Valley to Los Angeles should be a dual-purpose tunnel. Water could go through the same tunnels, saving a lot of energy. *(Verbal Comments – Sacramento Scoping Meeting)*	Comment forwarded to the Bakersfield to Palmdale Project Team
Renee Bulf	The San Francisco Bay deserves a second multimodal bridge crossing; it could serve automobiles, BART, and high-speed rail connectivity to the new San Francisco Transbay terminal, connecting Caltrain with the Capitol corridor as well. *(Verbal Comments – Sacramento Scoping Meeting)*	Comment forwarded to the San Francisco to San Jose Project Team
	Stop antagonizing south San Francisco Bay residents with plans to speed through their neighborhoods to go through an overpriced tube under the bay.	Comment forwarded to the San Francisco to San Jose Project Team
	Build a new multimodal bridge to connect San Francisco to Oakland for high-speed rail.	
David Crain	Due to high unemployment rate in Merced County, request that the Castle Air Force Base be chosen for the heavy maintenance facility. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Comment forwarded to the Merced to Fresno Project Team
Constance Farris	Support project, very much like to see the maintenance hub at Castle Air Force Base. Merced is the ideal place for a station. The University of California and community college can be utilized to train personnel. There is an abundance of housing and supporting business opportunities.	Comment forwarded to the Merced to Fresno Project Team
	Ask that you use paper cups and large containers of water vs. small plastic bottles at future meetings.	
James Gammon	Important to be sure that this Altamont corridor project connect in a very functional and efficient way, or some alternative be developed for efficient transportation, especially for commuting from Modesto to the Bay Area. *(Verbal Comments – Modesto Scoping Meeting)*	Comment forwarded to Altamont Corridor Project Team

TOPIC 6: ISSUES OUTSIDE SCOPE OF MERCED TO SACRAMENTO STUDY AREA

Commenter	Issues Outside Scope of Merced to Sacramento Study Area – Comments	Notes
Josh Grider	I would like to see this project having a project labor agreement and see this project having a local workforce.	Comment forwarded to Project Management Team for communication to CHSRA.
Suzanne Guthrie	Why is the Altamont route not the preferred route, it is already train-accessible and is closer to the important northern valley and state capitol.	Comment addressed by Bay Area to Central Valley Programmatic EIR/EIS documents. Comment forwarded to San Francisco to San Jose Project Team.
A. Hegler	San Francisco to Oakland to Martinez to Sacramento best go to "turnkey" route for right-of-way.	Comment address by Programmatic EIR/EIS documents. Comment forwarded to San Francisco to San Jose Project Team.
	Germany I.C.E. trains look best – E.M.U	Comment forwarded to Program Management Team for communication to CHSRA.
	Elevated right-of-way on San Francisco Peninsula – no tunnels. San Francisco Transbay building best, more direct. Tunnel no S curves.	Comment forwarded to San Francisco to San Jose Project Team.

TOPIC 6: ISSUES OUTSIDE SCOPE OF MERCED TO SACRAMENTO STUDY AREA

Commenter	Issues Outside Scope of Merced to Sacramento Study Area – Comments	Notes
Gunnar Henrioulle	Sacramento features for "escape track" consideration – lacking rail subway under Sacramento River to lessen dependence on problematic 1911 "I" Street swing bridge, "Tower Bridge" rail crossing must be re-commissioned. A proposed downtown streetcar presents depot area footprint, across Tower Bridge and adjacent to Yolo Short line that can be designed for use as Intermodal Complex bypass. Midterm US 50 corridor TranSierra rail line invites use of "R" Street Corridor subway and station connection design in context of new river crossing. Depressed tracks at 12th Street use subway platform, pass under river, and achieve grade near West Sacramento 5th Street overpass. Rather than face the crush on Pacheco in Sacramento disaster scenario, best make Sacramento rail amenities less vulnerable. Keep Capitol Corridor traffic on Capitol Corridor. Typical unused/dormant rail footprint will be needed in rail replacement program as trucking collapses to pick up delivery role due to motor fuel limits. One fears onset of motor transport crisis enlarges your area of responsibility by order of magnitude. Lacking freight rail capacity expansion, emergency use of HST lines for freight shall not be out of the question.	Commenter directed to Authority with larger issues regarding consideration of overall freight and energy network.
	Email with excerpt from Christopher Swan	
Jay Herbrand	Address parking (long-term and short-term) at station in Merced. If parking is not provided, benefits will be reduced due to high cost of taxi and limited bus interaction.	Comment forward to Merced to Fresno Project Team.
Adam Jautaikis	I would prefer to see this project built with a project labor agreement that would utilize local skilled labor.	Comment forwarded to Project Management Team for communication to CHSRA.
Lois Jimenez	Castle Air Force Base is the best place for a maintenance yard.	Comment forward to Merced to Fresno Project Team.
Angelo Lamas	I am supportive of high-speed rail system and would like to see the regional Altamont corridor plans go all the way to Merced rather than just to Modesto. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Comment forwarded to Altamont Corridor Project Team
Harriet Laulor	Merced has all the necessary components of a realistic site for the maintenance facility: Castle Air Force Base has infrastructure in place and would not raise environmental issues, affordable housing, university and community college to train workers, bedroom community for the Bay Area. We like Route 2.	Comment forward to Merced to Fresno Project Team.

TOPIC 6: ISSUES OUTSIDE SCOPE OF MERCED TO SACRAMENTO STUDY AREA

Commenter	Issues Outside Scope of Merced to Sacramento Study Area – Comments	Notes
Andrew Malik	We would like a station in Tracy. First choice would be in the downtown area near our transit center. The second choice would be south Tracy near the existing ACE station.	Chapter 2 Alternatives
Krisch Massey	I would like to see the line run to Atwater on the BNSF line.	Comment forward to Merced to Fresno Project Team.
	Hopefully by union skilled workers and all projects are American made.	Comment forwarded to Project Management Team for communication to CHSRA.
Maggie Mejia	In the first phase from Bakersfield to Merced, extend to Atwater because of the opportunity to utilize the old air base. This is an opportunity to decrease unemployment of Merced County and surrounding counties, Stanislaus included.	Comment forward to Merced to Fresno Project Team.
E Moore	Merced should be discussed now as the transfer station between the Central Valley and any future transit point to San Jose. Using Castle Air Force Base as a maintenance hub can also be a justification to make Merced a transfer point.	Comment forward to Merced to Fresno Project Team and Altamont Corridor Project Team.
Bill Nichols	MAX now connects with ACE in Lathrop. A rail connection from downtown would be terrific since the Merced – Sacramento link will be bottom priority as it has been with the Amtrak San Joaquin.	Comment forwarded to Altamont Corridor Project Team
Jason Overton	I would like to see this project have a project labor agreement and use local work forces.	Comment forwarded to Project Management Team for communication to CHSRA.
Joan Porter	I am against it going through our protected wetlands out the west side.	Comment forwarded to the San Jose to Merced Project Team
Billy Powell	The maintenance facility should be at Castle Air Force Base. Merced and Stanislaus County would greatly benefit with local jobs.	Comment forwarded to the Merced to Fresno Project Team

TOPIC 6: ISSUES OUTSIDE SCOPE OF MERCED TO SACRAMENTO STUDY AREA

Commenter	Issues Outside Scope of Merced to Sacramento Study Area – Comments	Notes
Jeremy Quinnett	I would like to see this project have a project labor agreement and use local work forces.	Comment forwarded to Project Management Team for communication to CHSRA.
Dirk Seeley	Proposed route will be about ¼ mile (0.4 kilometer [km]) from my house, and will probably mean changes to Road 9, which I live on. I have not received any notification of this proposal from the Authority. The first I heard of this was when some people from the Authority came to our house to put some test equipment there.	Comment forwarded to the Merced to Fresno Project Team
Ruth Ann Seeley	Until last week, did not know anything of proposed route. Two people came by and wanted to leave a box in our backyard to measure noise levels. We didn't receive any notice in the mail and we'd like to get on the mailing list. I don't want it in my backyard, but I would have had a much more positive feeling if I had some sort of notice. *(Verbal Comments – Merced Scoping Meeting)*	Comment forwarded to the Merced to Fresno Project Team with request to add to mailing list
Sharon Silva	We need to have a stop in Atwater.	Comment forwarded to the Merced to Fresno Project Team
Bill Spriggs	Castle has always been shown as a terminus.	Comment forwarded to the Merced to Fresno Project Team
Laura Diane Thornhill	Merced/Atwater Castle Air/Industrial Park is uniquely qualified as a maintenance hub due to central location, existing land, rail spurs, airport, and no impact on agriculture. Utilize our labor force and available housing.	Comment forwarded to the Merced to Fresno Project Team
Mel Thornhill	The Castle Air Force Base site is ideally suited as it is already publicly owned, no environmental issues, air strip for construction materials to be flown in, plenty of room for site construction, educational facilities to train workers, nearby access to aggregate for concrete. Using the Castle site will allow construction to start in the middle to access north, east, and south from a central point. Development of the airport to fly in and out to catch the train.	Comment forwarded to the Merced to Fresno Project Team
Suzanne Treller	Please use your available funding to build the backbone of the project through Merced. Castle AFB is uniquely qualified site for the maintenance facility with infrastructure in place.	Comment forwarded to the Merced to Fresno Project Team

TOPIC 6: ISSUES OUTSIDE SCOPE OF MERCED TO SACRAMENTO STUDY AREA

Commenter	Issues Outside Scope of Merced to Sacramento Study Area – Comments	Notes
Laura Vernon	Please keep me on your investor's list. If you'll let me know how you're going to fund the bullet train and with which company, I'll send you $5,000 to $10,000 to help finance the project.	Comment forwarded to Program Management Team for communication to CHSRA
Lana Vierra	Castle Air Force Base is a sensible site already containing the infrastructure and would help in curtailing the high percentage of skilled unemployed workers here in the Central Valley.	Comment forwarded to the Merced to Fresno Project Team
Ron West	The Authority should work with Altamont Rail to coordinate a new passenger rail connection down the east side of the Altamont rail system down Highway 5 through Patterson, Newman, Santa Nella, etc.	Comment forwarded to Altamont Corridor Project Team
Edward Yap	I would like to see this project happen and be under a project labor agreement. It would be nice or better if it is done by local workers.	Comment forwarded to Program Management Team for communication to CHSRA
Zabin Zara	Connection to Tracy. Any connection to Altamont Corridor or Altamont Connector.	Comment forwarded to Altamont Corridor Project Team

4.0 Next Steps

Following the scoping process, the project team will conduct an alternatives analysis to evaluate proposed alternatives at a more general level than would be conducted in a Draft EIR/EIS in order to provide the Authority Board of Directors with information necessary to determine which alternatives should be fully evaluated through the EIR/EIS process. This analysis will be partially based on the comments received during scoping, including alternatives proposed in scoping comments. Throughout the alternative analysis process, the project team will coordinate with federal, state, and local agencies.

Once the Authority and FRA have determined which alternatives will be evaluated in the Draft EIR/EIS, the project team will begin in-depth analysis of existing conditions in the project vicinity and potential impacts of the project alternatives. Throughout the evaluation process, the project team will coordinate with federal, state, and local agencies. The Authority will also continue to conduct public outreach to ensure that the public is apprised of the project's progress and has the opportunity to provide input.

The analysis of existing conditions and potential impacts of project alternatives will then be synthesized into the Draft EIR/EIS, and the FRA and the Authority will publish the Draft EIR/EIS. Publication is anticipated in summer 2012. A 60-day comment period will begin following publication of the Notice of Availability in the *Federal Register* and after filing a Notice of Completion with the California State Clearinghouse. The Authority will distribute notices of availability to those on the project mailing list and to potentially affected property owners. In addition, the EIR/EIS will be posted on the Authority's website. Public hearings will be provided in the project vicinity to give the public an opportunity to discuss the project with the project team based on information in the EIR/EIS and to provide comments. These public hearings will be advertised in local newspapers, included in the Notice of Availability and Notice of Completion, and posted on the Authority's website.

After close of the public comment period and review of agency and public comments on the EIR/EIS, the Authority's Board of Directors, in conjunction with the FRA, will select a preferred alternative based on the analysis in the EIR/EIS and comments received. Identification of the preferred alternative is anticipated at the end of 2012. Additional analysis of the preferred alternative will be conducted and a Final EIR/EIS published. The Final EIR/EIS will respond to comments received on the Draft EIR/EIS and will specify mitigation measures for project impacts. As with the Draft EIR/EIS, a Notice of Availability will be published in the *Federal Register*. The Authority will select the project to be built and prepare a Notice of Determination for the California State Clearinghouse pursuant to CEQA. With appropriate completion of the Final EIR/EIS, the FRA will issue a Record of Decision for the project, which will present the basis for the decision and summarize the mitigation measures that will be incorporated into the project. After the Record of Decision, project final design and construction can commence contingent on funding availability.